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CONTENTS

(January–June, 1948)

INDEX BY TITLES

Prose

	PAGE		PAGE
Academy Speaks, The, <i>Jean Hersholt</i> . . .	May 43	Have We an Intelligence Service? <i>Anon-ymous</i>	Apr. 66
Action at Salano Bay, <i>Edward K. Morris</i>	Jan. 94	Hidden Soul, The, <i>George Santayana</i> . . .	Apr. 54
Air Power and World Peace, <i>Thomas K. Finletter</i>	Apr. 25	Houlihan's Surrender, <i>James McConkey</i> . .	June 65
Alfred North Whitehead, 1861–1947, <i>Paul Weiss</i>	May 105	How Good Is Annapolis? Young Officer on Active Duty, <i>Lt. Comdr. Edwin E. Kintner</i>	Mar. 37
American in the Making, <i>Fiorello H. La Guardia</i>	Apr. 29, May 31, June 54	The First Classman Speaks, <i>Newbold Smith</i>	Mar. 39
Arabesque, <i>Geoffrey Household</i>	Mar. 69, Apr. 77, May 79, June 75	From the Civilian Professor, <i>Horace J. Fenton</i>	Mar. 40
Backroads River, <i>Wallace Stegner</i>	Jan. 59	From a Retired Rear Admiral, <i>Gilbert J. Rowcliff</i>	Mar. 41
"Banking Is an Art," <i>John P. Marquand</i> . .	Jan. 34	I Also Resigned, <i>Robert R. Park</i>	Mar. 42
Barring the Weight, <i>W. B. Ready</i>	May 65	Hunting Undersea, <i>Otis Barton</i>	June 25
Bracelet, The, <i>Monica Stirling</i>	Feb. 75	I Changed My Name, <i>Anonymous</i>	Feb. 72
Britain Had to Build, <i>Anthony F. Merrill</i>	Mar. 67	I Like the Greeks, <i>Osbert Lancaster</i> . . .	May 73
Can Lawyers Talk English? <i>William Seagle</i>	Mar. 95	I've Kept My Name, <i>David L. Cohn</i> . . .	Apr. 42
Can't Spell, Can't Read, <i>J. Roswell Gallagher, M.D.</i>	June 35	If Corporations Will Give, <i>Laird Bell</i> . .	May 68
Capital Punishment, <i>G. Bernard Shaw</i> . .	June 52	Impact of Protestantism Today, The, <i>Reinhold Niebuhr</i>	Feb. 57
Castle of Snow, <i>Joseph Heller</i>	Mar. 52	Inflation Hits the Colleges, <i>James Phinney Baxter</i>	Mar. 59
Cloves of Zanzibar, The, <i>A. W. Smith</i> . . .	Mar. 63	Iron We Need, The, <i>Clarence B. Randall</i>	June 60
Composers Must Eat, <i>Huntington Cairns</i> .	Mar. 43	Italy — Is Aid Enough? <i>William G. Congdon</i>	May 46
Country That Can Feed the World?, The, <i>Fairfield Osborn</i>	Apr. 71	John Adams and Rousseau, <i>Zoltan Haraszti</i>	Feb. 95
Crowded Off the Earth, <i>Fairfield Osborn</i>	Mar. 17	Last Day, The, <i>John Craig Stewart</i> . . .	Feb. 52
Deal in Cards, A, <i>Daniel Curley</i>	Apr. 58	Libertine, The, <i>George Santayana</i>	Mar. 28
Death of a Pig, <i>E. B. White</i>	Jan. 30	Literary Memories, <i>Franklin P. Adams</i> . .	Jan. 114
Fiasco in Food, <i>Fredrick J. Stare, M.D.</i> .	Jan. 21	Living Saint: Rabbi Baeck, A, <i>Joshua Loth Liebman</i>	June 40
For Heaven's Sake, <i>Hannah Smith</i> . . .	June 71	Love Letters of Mark Twain, The, <i>Dixon Wecter (Ed.)</i>	Jan. 83
Freedom of the Brush, <i>Daniel Catton Rich</i>	Feb. 47	Low Water, <i>Geoffrey Household</i>	Jan. 73
General Patton's War Letters, <i>George S. Patton, Jr.</i>	Jan. 53	Marooned in the Clouds, <i>Marguerite Gaylord Tate</i>	Feb. 34
George Pierce Baker, <i>Rollo Walter Brown</i>	Feb. 66		

No Safety in Numbers, <i>Lt. Gen. Robert C. Richardson, Jr. (Ret.)</i>	June	30	Stimson and Hull, <i>James H. Powers</i>	June	95
Oracles and Omens, <i>William Howells</i>	Jan.	78	Stop Russia's Subversive War, <i>William J. Donovan</i>	May	27
Oscar Night in Hollywood, <i>Raymond Chandler</i>	Mar.	24	Sullivan, Shakespear, and Shaw, <i>G. Bernard Shaw</i>	Mar.	56
Other People's Children, <i>Irwin Edman</i>	Feb.	63	Sylvester the Bull, <i>Louis Bromfield</i>	Apr.	45
Problems of the Catholic Writer, <i>Harry Sylvester</i>	Jan.	109	Temper of Steel, The, <i>James Jones</i>	Mar.	32
Psychiatry Today, <i>William C. Menninger, M.D.</i>	Jan.	65	Ten Best Novels, The, <i>W. Somerset Maugham</i>		
Radio and Who Makes It, <i>John Crosby</i>	Jan.	23	Balzac	Jan.	46
Rivalry of Nations, The, <i>Walter Lippmann</i>	Feb.	17	Moby Dick	June	98
Russia, the U.S., and the Atom, <i>A Foreign Observer</i>	Apr.	51	Pride and Prejudice	May	99
Saddle, The, <i>Courtenay Terrett</i>	Apr.	36	The Brothers Karamazov	Mar.	89
Safe and Insane, <i>Philip Wylie</i>	Jan.	90	The Red and the Black	Apr.	97
Scientist in Our Unique Society, The, <i>James Bryant Conant</i>	Mar.	47	Wuthering Heights	Feb.	89
Search for Atomic Control, The, <i>Fredrick H. Osborn</i>	Apr.	48	This Thing Called Love, <i>Bergen Evans</i>	Feb.	26
Shower of Gold, <i>Eudora Welty</i>	May	37	Vortex of Dialectic, The, <i>George Santayana</i>	May	51
Six Months Is No Long Time, <i>Leon Wilson</i>	June	44	"Washington Is Situated . . . , " <i>James Hilton</i>	Feb.	30
Spengler and Toynbee, <i>Owen Lattimore</i>	Apr.	104	Winds Along the Dunes, <i>Wyman Richardson, M.D.</i>	Apr.	62
			Working Our Dollars Abroad, <i>Everett M. Dirksen</i>	Feb.	21
			Year of the Flood, The, <i>Louis Bromfield</i>	May	59

Poetry

Birth Day, <i>Robert Cecil</i>	May	72	Peace of Lazarus, The, <i>Leonard Bacon</i>	Jan.	57
Come Day, Come Dark, <i>Louis Kent</i>	Mar.	46	Poem, The, <i>Elford Caughey</i>	Feb.	29
Failure, <i>Daniel J. Berrigan, S.J.</i>	May	107	Poems, <i>Elford Caughey</i>	Mar.	36
House and Home, <i>George Allen</i>	Feb.	71	Smuggler's Gap, <i>Sara Holmes</i>	May	50
Lady and the Unicorn, The, <i>May Sarton</i>	Jan.	89	Someone at the Door, <i>Leonard Bacon</i>	June	34
New Worlds for Old, <i>R. P. Lister</i>	Mar.	58	Song for the Local Apocalypse, <i>Theodore Spencer</i>	June	53
Nightfall Bay, <i>Robert Hillyer</i>	Mar.	31	Thus to Revisit, <i>Anne Goodwin Winslow</i>	Jan.	98
Now That Lost April . . . , <i>Winfield Townley Scott</i>	Apr.	65	Where You Chose to Be, <i>Robert P. Tristram Coffin</i>	Feb.	33

The Atlantic Serial

Arabesque, <i>Geoffrey Household</i> Mar. 69, Apr. 77, May 79, June 75	"Banking Is an Art," <i>John P. Marquand</i>	Jan.	34
---	--	------	----

CONTENTS

v

Accent on Living

(* Indicates a poem)

*Badger Pass, <i>Winona McClintic</i>	Mar. 88	Plumbing in Portuguese, <i>Penelope Crane</i>	June 94
*Ballade on Experience, <i>R. P. Lister</i>	May 94	*Proposed Amendment, <i>Georgie Starbuck Galbraith</i>	Mar. 86
Be Your Own Architect! <i>Edwin B. Morris</i>	Feb. 86		
*Before the Ball, <i>R. P. Lister</i>	Feb. 87		
Cook Is Born, <i>A. Giles Playfair</i>	June 92	Red Beard in the Morning, <i>Robert Fontaine</i>	June 90
*Day After Saturday, The, <i>Edward Watkins</i>	Mar. 84	Rice and Curries, <i>Crosby Gaige</i>	Jan. 102
*Death of Dunbar's Cat, The, <i>Charles P. Curtis, Jr.</i>	Apr. 96		
Eardrums Along the Mohawk, <i>René MacColl</i>	May 92	*Salty Acres, <i>Harvena Conrad Richter</i>	June 92
*Elderberry Butter, <i>Minna Keyser</i>	June 90	Science of Science-Fiction, The, <i>John W. Campbell, Jr.</i>	May 97
		Scrimshaw, <i>MacKinley Helm</i>	Jan. 106
Gold Hoarders, The, <i>Armand de Richelieu</i>	June 89	*Skyscraper, <i>Evelyn Ames</i>	Apr. 91
Gypsy Fiddle, <i>Joseph Wechsberg</i>	Jan. 100	Smoke Without Fire, <i>Giles Playfair</i>	Apr. 96
		Snakes for the Squeamish, <i>A. B. Guthrie, Jr.</i>	Feb. 87
Hither and Fro, <i>Alan Devoe</i>	June 88	Step Off the Gas, <i>Erle Stanley Gardner</i>	Apr. 90
How Cool Is a Cucumber? <i>Lorus J. Milne</i>	Apr. 94		
Morocco, <i>William Bird</i>	Mar. 82	Thanks for a Terrible Try, <i>R. J. Hicks</i>	Jan. 104
Oldest Inhabitants, <i>John W. Vandercook</i>	Feb. 82	*Tiger Lilies, <i>Padraic Colum</i>	May 96
*On Seeing Phoebe in a Bus Queue, <i>R. P. Lister</i>	Apr. 94	Tourist in Italy, <i>Charles J. Rolo</i>	Mar. 84
		Tourist in Peru, <i>Ray Josephs</i>	Apr. 92
		Tourist in Switzerland, <i>Joseph Wechsberg</i>	Mar. 87
		Twilight Furioso, <i>Lowell Kindschi</i>	May 95
		Two Men on a Vehicle, <i>Roland Kibbee</i>	Feb. 84

INDEX BY AUTHORS

Adams, Franklin P., <i>Literary Memories</i>	Jan. 114	Campbell, John W., Jr., <i>The Science of Science-Fiction</i>	May 97
Allen, George, <i>House and Home</i>	Feb. 71	Caughey, Elford, <i>Poems</i>	Mar. 36
Ames, Evelyn, <i>Skyscraper</i>	Apr. 91	<i>The Poem</i>	Feb. 29
Anonymous, <i>Have We an Intelligence Service?</i>	Apr. 66	Cecil, Robert, <i>Birth Day</i>	May 72
Anonymous, <i>I Changed My Name</i>	Feb. 72	Chandler, Raymond, <i>Oscar Night in Hollywood</i>	Mar. 24
Bacon, Leonard, <i>Someone at the Door</i>	June 34	Coffin, Robert P. Tristram, <i>Where You Chose to Be</i>	Feb. 33
<i>The Peace of Lazarus</i>	Jan. 57	Cohn, David L., <i>I've Kept My Name</i>	Apr. 42
Barton, Otis, <i>Hunting Undersea</i>	June 25	Colum, Padraic, <i>Tiger Lilies</i>	May 96
Baxter, James Phinney, <i>Inflation Hits the Colleges</i>	Mar. 59	Conant, James Bryant, <i>The Scientist in Our Unique Society</i>	Mar. 47
Bell, Laird, <i>If Corporations Will Give</i>	May 68	Congdon, William G., <i>Italy — Is Aid Enough?</i>	May 46
Berrigan, Daniel J., S.J., <i>Failure</i>	May 107	Crane, Penelope, <i>Plumbing in Portuguese</i>	June 94
Bird, William, <i>Morocco</i>	Mar. 82	Crosby, John, <i>Radio and Who Makes It</i>	Jan. 23
Bromfield, Louis, <i>Sylvester the Bull</i>	Apr. 45	Curley, Daniel, <i>A Deal in Cards</i>	Apr. 58
<i>The Year of the Flood</i>	May 59	Curtis, Charles P., Jr., <i>The Death of Dunbar's Cat</i>	Apr. 96
Brown, Rollo Walter, <i>George Pierce Baker</i>	Feb. 66		
Cairns, Huntington, <i>Composers Must Eat</i>	Mar. 43		

CONTENTS

Devoe, Alan, <i>Hither and Fro</i>	June	88	Lippmann, Walter, <i>The Rivalry of Nations</i>	Feb.	17
Dirksen, Everett M., <i>Working Our Dollars Abroad</i>	Feb.	21	Lister, R. P., <i>Ballade on Experience</i>	May	94
Donovan, William J., <i>Stop Russia's Subversive War</i>	May	27	<i>Before the Ball</i>	Feb.	87
Edman, Irwin, <i>Other People's Children</i>	Feb.	63	<i>New Worlds for Old</i>	Mar.	58
Evans, Bergen, <i>This Thing Called Love</i>	Feb.	26	<i>On Seeing Phoebe in a Bus Queue</i>	Apr.	94
Fenton, Horace J., <i>From the Civilian Professor</i>	Mar.	40	MacColl, René, <i>Eardrums Along the Mohawk</i>	May	92
Finletter, Thomas K., <i>Air Power and World Peace</i>	Apr.	25	Marquand, John P., <i>"Banking Is an Art"</i>	Jan.	34
Fontaine, Robert, <i>Red Beard in the Morning</i>	June	90	Maugham, W. Somerset, <i>The Ten Best Novels</i>		
Foreign Observer, A, <i>Russia, the U.S., and the Atom</i>	Apr.	51	<i>Balzac</i>	Jan.	46
Gaige, Crosby, <i>Rice and Curries</i>	Jan.	102	<i>Moby Dick</i>	June	98
Galbraith, Georgie Starbuck, <i>Proposed Amendment</i>	Mar.	86	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	May	99
Gallagher, J. Roswell, M.D., <i>Can't Spell, Can't Read</i>	June	35	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	Mar.	89
Gardner, Erle Stanley, <i>Step Off the Gas</i>	Apr.	90	<i>The Red and the Black</i>	Apr.	97
Guthrie, A. B., Jr., <i>Snakes for the Squeamish</i>	Feb.	87	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	Feb.	89
Haraszti, Zoltan, <i>John Adams and Rousseau</i>	Feb.	95	McClintic, Winona, <i>Badger Pass</i>	Mar.	88
Heller, Joseph, <i>Castle of Snow</i>	Mar.	52	McConkey, James, <i>Houlihan's Surrender</i>	June	65
Helm, MacKinley, <i>Scrimshaw</i>	Jan.	106	Menninger, William C., M.D., <i>Psychiatry Today</i>	Jan.	65
Hersholt, Jean, <i>The Academy Speaks</i>	May	43	Merrill, Anthony F., <i>Britain Had to Build</i>	Mar.	67
Hicks, R. J., <i>Thanks for a Terrible Try</i>	Jan.	104	Milne, Lorus J., <i>How Cool Is a Cucum-ber?</i>	Apr.	94
Hillyer, Robert, <i>Nightfall Bay</i>	Mar.	31	Morris, Edward K., <i>Action at Salano Bay</i>	Jan.	94
Hilton, James, <i>"Washington Is Situated . . ."</i>	Feb.	30	Morris, Edwin B., <i>Be Your Own Architect!</i>	Feb.	86
Holmes, Sara, <i>Smuggler's Gap</i>	May	50	Niebuhr, Reinhold, <i>The Impact of Protestantism Today</i>	Feb.	57
Household, Geoffrey, <i>Arabesque</i>	Mar. 69, Apr. 77, May 79, June 75		Osborn, Fairfield, <i>Crowded Off the Earth</i>	Mar.	17
<i>Low Water</i>	Jan.	73	<i>The Country That Can Feed the World?</i>	Apr.	71
Howells, William, <i>Oracles and Omens</i>	Jan.	78	Osborn, Frederick H., <i>The Search for Atomic Control</i>	Apr.	48
Jones, James, <i>The Temper of Steel</i>	Mar.	32	Park, Robert R., <i>I Also Resigned</i>	Mar.	42
Josephs, Ray, <i>Tourist in Peru</i>	Apr.	92	Patton, George S., Jr., <i>General Patton's War Letters</i>	Jan.	53
Kent, Louis, <i>Come Day, Come Dark</i>	Mar.	46	Playfair, Giles, <i>A Cook Is Born</i>	June	92
Keyser, Minna, <i>Elderberry Butter</i>	June	90	<i>Smoke Without Fire</i>	Apr.	96
Kibbee, Roland, <i>Two Men on a Vehicle</i>	Feb.	84	Powers, James H., <i>Stimson and Hull</i>	June	95
Kindschi, Lowell, <i>Twilight Furioso</i>	May	95	Randall, Clarence B., <i>The Iron We Need</i>	June	60
Kintner, Lt. Comdr. Edwin E., <i>Young Officer on Active Duty</i>	Mar.	37	Ready, W. B., <i>Barring the Weight</i>	May	65
La Guardia, Fiorello H., <i>American in the Making</i>	Apr. 29, May 31, June 54		Rich, Daniel Catton, <i>Freedom of the Brush</i>	Feb.	47
Lancaster, Osbert, <i>I Like the Greeks</i>	May	73	Richardson, Lt. Gen. Robert C., Jr. (Ret.), <i>No Safety in Numbers</i>	June	30
Lattimore, Owen, <i>Spengler and Toynbee</i>	Apr.	104	Richardson, Wyman, M.D., <i>Winds Along the Dunes</i>	Apr.	62
Liebman, Joshua Loth, <i>A Living Saint: Rabbi Baeck</i>	June	40	Richelieu, Armand de, <i>The Gold Hoarders</i>	June	89
			Richter, Harvena Conrad, <i>Salty Acres</i>	June	92
			Rolo, Charles J., <i>Tourist in Italy</i>	Mar.	84
			Rowcliff, Gilbert J., <i>From a Retired Rear Admiral</i>	Mar.	41

CONTENTS

VII

Santayana, George, <i>The Hidden Soul</i> . . .	Apr. 54	Tate, Marguerite Gaylord, <i>Marooned in the Clouds</i> . . .	Feb. 34
<i>The Libertine</i>	Mar. 28	Terrett, Courtenay, <i>The Saddle</i> . . .	Apr. 36
<i>The Vortex of Dialectic</i>	May 51		
Sarton, May, <i>The Lady and the Unicorn</i> .	Jan. 89	Vandercook, John W., <i>Oldest Inhabitants</i>	Feb. 82
Scott, Winfield Townley, <i>Now That Lost April</i>	Apr. 65		
Seagle, William, <i>Can Lawyers Talk English?</i>	Mar. 95	Watkins, Edward, <i>The Day After Saturday</i>	Mar. 84
Shaw, G. Bernard, <i>Capital Punishment</i> .	June 52	Wechsberg, Joseph, <i>Gypsy Fiddle</i> . . .	Jan. 100
<i>Sullivan, Shakespear, and Shaw</i> . . .	Mar. 56	<i>Tourist in Switzerland</i>	Mar. 87
Smith, A. W., <i>The Cloves of Zanzibar</i> . .	Mar. 63	Wecter, Dixon (Ed.), <i>The Love Letters of Mark Twain</i>	Jan. 83
Smith, Hannah, <i>For Heaven's Sake</i> . . .	June 71	Weiss, Paul, <i>Alfred North Whitehead, 1861-1947</i>	May 105
Smith, Newbold, <i>The First Classman Speaks</i>	Mar. 39	Welty, Eudora, <i>Shower of Gold</i>	May 37
Spencer, Theodore, <i>Song for the Local Apocalypse</i>	June 53	White, E. B., <i>Death of a Pig</i>	Jan. 30
Stare, Fredrick J., M.D., <i>Fiasco in Food</i> .	Jan. 21	Wilson, Leon, <i>Six Months Is No Long Time</i>	June 44
Stegner, Wallace, <i>Backroads River</i> . . .	Jan. 59	Winslow, Anne Goodwin, <i>Thus to Revisit</i>	Jan. 98
Stewart, John Craig, <i>The Last Day</i> . . .	Feb. 52	Wylie, Philip, <i>Safe and Insane</i>	Jan. 90
Stirling, Monica, <i>The Bracelet</i>	Feb. 75		
Sylvester, Harry, <i>Problems of the Catholic Writer</i>	Jan. 109		

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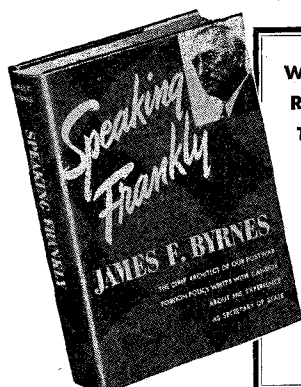
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WHAT WERE THE SECRET AGREEMENTS BETWEEN STALIN AND ROOSEVELT THAT BYRNES AND TRUMAN DISCOVERED WHEN THEY HAD TO NEGOTIATE AT POTSDAM? . . . OVER WHAT ISSUE DID ROOSEVELT FINALLY LOSE PATIENCE WITH STALIN, GETTING SOMETHING LIKE A NEAR-APOLOGY? . . . WHAT ARE THE RUSSIANS REALLY AFTER IN GERMANY, JUDGING FROM AN UNGUARDED CONFESSION OF MOLOTOV? . . . "SPEAKING FRANKLY" IS FILLED WITH SENSATIONAL REVELATIONS SUCH AS THESE, HEIGHTENED BY THE QUIET TONE.



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MR. MOLOTOV AND "NYET"

I have had quite a broad experience in dealing with men. My active practice as a trial lawyer was rich with such experience. In my service in the House of Representatives and in the Senate I served with over two thousand Representatives and nearly two hundred Senators. I conferred with most of them in the adjustment of differences within each branch and between the two branches of Congress. As Justice of the Supreme Court, as Director, first of Economic Stabilization, and then of War Mobilization, I met many interests, and settled many



MOLOTOV

issues. But through all these years I had no experience that prepared me for negotiation with Mr. Molotov. . . . If we are correctly informed about the patience exercised by Job, I am certain Mr. Molotov is one of his lineal descendants. He has unlimited patience as well as a fine mind and tremendous energy. Any exhibition of impatience or bad temper by others gives him amusement. . . . He will argue for hours about what subjects should be placed on an agenda. You must not only be patient but also must watch carefully even the manner in which your own proposal is stated. If you do not, you will later spend hours trying to get your complete proposal before the council for discussion. Mr. Molotov's answer will be "Nyet," the Russian word for "No," which I heard so often that I almost accept it as part of my own language. He can say in English, "I agree," but so seldom does he agree that his pronunciation isn't very good.

MR. VYSHINSKI AND VODKA

Mr. Vyshinski is an able and aggressive lawyer. When he sits across the table looking at you with his cold, gray, piercing eyes and arguing his case with relentless precision, it is easy to understand his selection as Chief Prosecutor in the Soviet



STALIN

STALIN SAID HITLER LIVES

The Marshal (Stalin) left his place and came to clink his glass with mine in approval of the sentiment. The truth is, he is a very likeable person. . . . During the discussion Stalin made a very interesting reference to his conception of the United States in world affairs. Whether the United States wished it or not, he said, we were a world power and would have to accept world-wide responsibilities. Without our intervention in the last two wars, Germany could not have been defeated. . . . I asked (Stalin) his views of how Hitler had died. To my surprise, he said he believed that Hitler was alive and that it was possible he was then either in Spain or Argentina. Some ten days later I asked him if he had changed his views and he said he had not.

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Atlantic Reports on the World Today

Fiasco in Food	FREDRICK J. STARE, M.D.	21
Radio and Who Makes It	JOHN CROSBY	23
Death of a Pig	E. B. WHITE	30
"Banking Is an Art." <i>The Atlantic Serial</i>	JOHN P. MARQUAND	34
Balzac. <i>The Ten Best Novels</i>	SOMERSET MAUGHAM	46
General Patton's War Letters	GEORGE S. PATTON, JR.	53
The Peace of Lazarus. <i>A Poem</i>	LEONARD BACON	57
Backroads River	WALLACE STEGNER	59
Psychiatry Today	WILLIAM C. MENNINGER, M.D.	65
Low Water. <i>A Story</i>	GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD	73
Oracles and Omens	WILLIAM HOWELLS	78
The Love Letters of Mark Twain	<i>Edited by</i> DIXON WECTER	83
The Lady and the Unicorn. <i>A Poem</i>	MAY SARTON	89
Safe and Insane	PHILIP WYLIE	90
Action at Salano Bay. <i>An Atlantic "First"</i>	EDWARD K. MORRIS	94
Thus to Revisit. <i>A Poem</i>	ANNE GOODWIN WINSLOW	98

ACCENT ON LIVING

Joseph Wechsberg — Crosby Gaige — R. J. Hicks — MacKinley Helm	99
--	----

BOOKS AND MEN

Problems of a Catholic Writer	HARRY SYLVESTER	109
Literary Memories	FRANKLIN P. ADAMS	114

ATLANTIC BOOKSHELF

Edward Weeks — Raymond Swing — R. E. Danielson — Short Reviews	117
--	-----

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THE ATLANTIC REPORT

on the World today

The Middle East

THE United Nations' handling of the Palestine question was one of the most heartening international developments since the war. The Special Committee, an impartially appointed instrument of world opinion, removed the most important aspects of the problem from the realm of controversy. Unanimously it recommended termination of the British Mandate and independence for Palestine. By a majority of seven to three it presented a plan for partition far removed in spirit and in detail from the "federation" scheme advanced last year by the British Cabinet. It also recommended that during the transition period the Mandatory Power be responsible for the admission of 150,000 immigrants into the proposed Jewish state and abolish the restrictions on land sales to Jews in that area.

Attempts to delay the UN Assembly's vote on the partition plan were frustrated by U.S.-Russian insistence on a decision, and the plan was carried thirty-three to thirteen, with ten abstentions. The only non-Moslem countries which voted against partition were Greece and Cuba.

The UN plan found the United States and Soviet Russia substantially in agreement for the first time on a major issue — an electrifying development that gave a sorely needed lift to the world organization. Furthermore, Gromyko's and Tsarapkin's surprise declarations in support of a Jewish state — made in the face of Arab threats to the West of a bolt into the Soviet camp — undercut the Arab League game of playing the powers off against each other and placed the whole Middle East situation in a more realistic perspective.

The outstanding stumbling block to a solution was Britain's refusal, despite its decision to evacu-

ate Palestine, to coöperate in a settlement not acceptable to Arabs and Jews alike. This attitude came strangely from a government which had submitted the problem to the UN on the very ground that all possibilities of Arab-Jewish agreement had been exhausted; and which, furthermore, had shown no compunction about using force to impose the pro-Arab White Paper at great cost to itself in lives and money.

The United States and Russia achieved a compromise which asked no more of the Mandatory than to maintain order until evacuation and give to Arabs and Jews an equal opportunity to prepare for safeguarding their independence.

Will the Arabs go to war?

That there will be violence in Palestine is certain. But how much? Arab reluctance to make sacrifices to combat Zionism is a matter of record. Despite the tempest of speechmaking that greeted the 1936 Palestine riots, little was done to assist the insurgents, who at no time numbered more than 3000. The current Arab boycott of Zionist products has been so flagrantly violated that not long ago the Iraqi premier declared that only in Iraq was the boycott effective. It is no secret in the Middle East capitals that the Arab League meeting in Beirut, summoned in October to plan warfare against a Jewish state, degenerated into a contest between the Mufti and King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan for control of Palestine.

The long-standing feud between the Mufti and Abdullah — referred to as "Rabbi Abdullah" in the Mufti's Berlin broadcasts — is characteristic of the fissures within the Arab League. Abdullah for his part nurses a long-standing quarrel with Ibn



The Atlantic Report on the Middle East



Saud, who expelled Abdullah's father, King Husain, from the Hejaz in 1924.

Trans-Jordan and Iraq form a close partnership within the League by reason of family ties: the boy king of Iraq is Abdullah's grandnephew and the regent is his nephew. The two Hashemite (of the family of Husain) countries, while retaining separate rulers, plan to abolish customs barriers and to adopt a common currency and passport system as first steps toward a more ambitious program of federation — the so-called Greater Syria plan, one of the most explosive issues within the Arab world.

The plan is vehemently opposed by most Syrian politicians, who see their jobs endangered, and by the Christian majority in the Lebanon, which is fearful of being engulfed in a Moslem confederation. The latter have never forgotten the massacre of Assyrian Christians in Iraq after the First World War, and feel that their security is linked with that of the other large non-Moslem minority in the Arab world.

King Farouk of Egypt is a staunch upholder of the status quo, under which his country is the richest, the most populous, and the most highly industrialized of the Arab states. He and Ibn Saud heartily agree that Hashemite ambitions must be held in check, but their own relations are strained. In the eyes of Ibn Saud, leader of the Wahabites, the puritans of Islam, Farouk is a westernized young upstart who has the presumption to challenge his claim to Arab leadership.

The intensity of Arab rivalries makes it improbable that the Arab leaders will succeed in forging a military coalition. It is still less probable, should they go to war, that they could overcome the Hagana or Jewish Defense Force. Even as an illegal formation, the Hagana — estimated to be 70,000 to 80,000 strong — is a well-trained, well-equipped fighting force, officered by men who fought in the British Army, some with the Commandos. As the army of an independent Jewish state, its manpower could be appreciably enlarged and its equipment fortified by Palestine industry, which turned out considerable quantities of war material for the British.

Second-rate Arab Army

All the Arab armies together total approximately 135,000 men, a high proportion of whom must be kept at home to maintain order among the discontented masses and — in the case of Syria and Iraq — to cope with mutinous tribesmen. And this figure cannot be greatly strengthened by conscrip-

tion. Eighty per cent of Egyptian recruits are rejected as physically unfit, and the health of the masses is, if anything, lower elsewhere.

The only first-class fighting units in the Arab world are the Trans-Jordan Arab Legion and the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force, both of which obey British orders; their involvement would be tantamount to British intervention. The Iraqi Army, strongest of the purely Arab forces, demonstrated its ineptitude both in Rashid Ali's pro-Axis revolt and in its incapacity to subdue Kurdish rebellions without British assistance. It was Lawrence of Arabia who said of the Arabs' fighting prowess in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*: "One company of Turks firmly entrenched in open country could have defied the entire army of them."

So it would be today. Testifying before the Anglo-American Committee, General D'Arcy, then Commander-in-Chief in Palestine, declared that the Hagana could hold the country against all the Arab states for years. One reservation is necessary. Britain is at present helping to train and equip most of the Arab armies. Were such assistance allowed to continue after the Arabs went to war, the Hagana would be placed at a hopeless disadvantage.

Misery for the poor

A Palestine settlement will in the long run compel the Arab rulers to devote more attention to the plight of the barefoot Arab. Poverty and disease make the life of the Arab peasant or worker a condition little removed from walking death. A random sampling of social statistics tells an appalling story. In Egypt and other parts of the Middle East, nearly 90 per cent of the peasantry are wasting away from bilharzia. Malaria kills 50,000 annually in Iraq. The incidence of pellagra and trachoma is staggeringly high. Limbs are everywhere disfigured by what a perverted nationalism variously terms the Nile boil, the Bagdad boil, and the Aleppo Button.

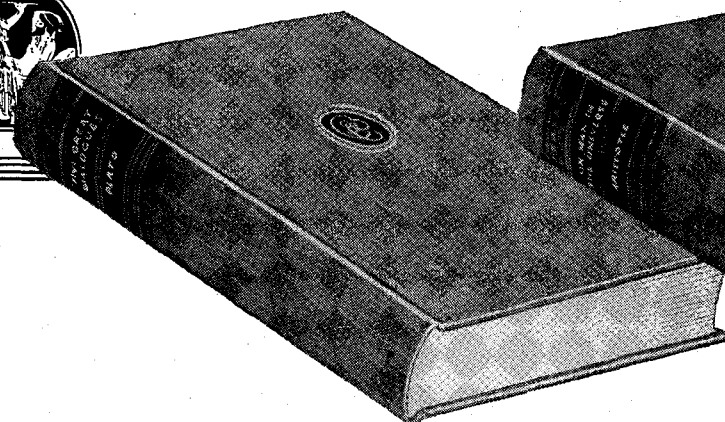
Life expectancy in Iraq is 27 years; one child in two dies before the age of five. In Egypt, the most advanced of the Arab states, the death rate is higher than in India; in rural areas there is but one doctor to every 10,000 inhabitants. In the whole of Trans-Jordan, three times the size of Palestine, there are twenty-four physicians and five dentists. Everywhere dirt, ignorance, and official apathy and corruption invite epidemic disease; Egypt's cholera epidemic, now in its fourth month, is still spreading. During a previous anti-plague campaign it cost the Egyptian government \$50 to kill a rat.

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The Atlantic Report *on the Middle East*



One half of one per cent of the population owns one third of the land. Under an antiquated system of land tenure, the Arab peasantry is chronically in debt to usurers and absentee landlords; interest rates frequently range from 50 to 200 per cent. The average annual income of an Iraqi peasant family before the war was \$35. Children six years old are employed in the cotton-gin plant of the Banque Misr of Egypt for a daily wage of fifteen cents. The Syrian agricultural worker is paid even less. Iraq, once the seat of a flowering civilization, now cultivates only 20 per cent of its arable land; Syria only 35 per cent. Slavery is recognized by law in Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, which was recently admitted to the UN.

Nothing remotely resembling democratic political conditions obtains in any of the Arab countries. Arab politics is an affair of personalities and family loyalties. When a former Egyptian premier was accused of packing the administration with his near relatives, he replied: "How can I run a government unless I have men I can trust in the key positions?"

Censorship powers enable the Arab governments to suspend or suppress by ministerial fiat newspapers critical of the administration. The Syrian Ministry of the Interior may dissolve any political party, group, or club that appears to act contrary to "the basic principles of the republican constitution."

Subsidies for the rich

In the past decade, hundreds of millions of dollars have poured into the Arab world — in the form of British subsidies, interest-free loans, oil royalties and expenditures by the oil companies, and war-time payments for goods and services purchased at highly inflated prices. Most of this wealth has been dissipated in regal display and the enrichment of the moneyed classes. Some of it now goes to support the Arab League, which can afford to vote the Mufti an allowance of \$400,000.

These resources, if devoted to education, irrigation projects, and social services, could have transformed the face of the Arab world. The agricultural research section of the American Near East Foundation — a fine example of disinterested endeavor among the Arabs — offers impressive evidence of how much can be accomplished with how little: an expenditure of \$600 on experiments to combat tomato disease in the Lebanon saved a crop worth two millions.

One of the great barriers to progress in the Arab world has been the relative absence of a socially

conscious middle class. In the Lebanon, where French and American educators have long been active, 70 per cent of the population are literate, but elsewhere illiteracy ranges from 70 per cent in Syria to 90 per cent in Iraq, and more than that in the Arabian quadrilateral. There is no university in Iraq and only one newspaper in the Yemen, a country the size of Kansas with 3½ million people.

Rising clamor for reform

Thus between the ruling Arab oligarchy and the inarticulate masses there exists only a thin layer of struggling professional men, underpaid white-collar workers (most of them in the bureaucracy), and excitable students. Many of the members of this group, proud of being effendis (gentlemen) and conscious of their dependence on patronage for advancement, have in the past identified their interests with those of the pashas, and so have failed to constitute a progressive force in politics. Since the war, however, there has been a growing change in the outlook of the Arab middle-class intelligentsia — the most significant development in the Arab world since the time of Lawrence.

The young effendis in Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, and Bagdad are beginning to translate volatile clamor for reform into insistent pressure. Despite the repressive policies now in force under the guise of combating Communism, leftist journals and reform movements are sprouting faster than they can be suppressed.

The unanimity and vigor with which rival opposition parties protested the Lebanese and Iraqi elections are symptoms of a new temper among articulate Arabs. They cannot be swindled much longer with artificial excuses for postponing improvement of social conditions and obstructing the march of civilization. The proposed Jewish state will have the effect of quickening the civilizing process. In the course of time, it is bound to stimulate progressive Arabs with the example of an advanced technology, democratic institutions, and a sense of the dignity of human life unknown to the Arab oligarchy.

The Arab's greatest champion, T. E. Lawrence, once wrote: "I am decidedly in favor of Zionism. Indeed, I look on the Jews as the natural importers of that Western leaven which is so necessary for the countries of the Near East. . . . The success of their scheme will involve inevitably the raising of the present Arab population to their own material level, only a little after themselves in point of time, and the consequences might be of the highest importance for the future of the Arab world."



Washington

A VISITING Englishman who comes to Washington regularly was amazed at the anti-Communist hysteria that he encountered. He had in mind both the loyalty investigations and the committee hearings in Congress. "In England and on the Continent," he said, "we are either next door to Communism or embroiled in it, yet there is far less panic on the subject than you display." Certainly the visitor had some reason for wonderment. The question arises in many sober minds whether the measures that have been taken are not more menacing to our liberties than the danger.

To many observers the methods of conducting Congressional investigations nowadays are a distortion of our institutions. Chairmen "try" individuals in the newspapers before they come up for questioning. There are no rules of evidence and cross-examination. The practice of framing an indictment prior to the establishment of evidence is common. The remedy lies with Congress. A fairer procedure is clearly in order if the great value of the Congressional investigation is to be conserved.

Do government employees have rights?

The hubbub caused by the loyalty probes of government employees has died down for the time being, a result of the State Department decision to accept the resignations of the men who were fired bearing the stigma of disloyalty. In this instance Secretary Marshall bowed to public criticism.

Little is known about the discharged officials. Some are said to have nothing more against them than that they "leaked" to well-known columnists. Others are said to have been attached too passionately to such causes as Zionism. The extent to which these rumors are based on fact is impossible to trace, for a shroud of secrecy covers the whole proceeding. Nobody doubts that there were "rotten apples" in the barrel; but, as in the case of the investigation committees, it is the procedure that has been called in question.

The President's Committee on Civil Rights declared that each employee of the government facing dismissal "should have the right to a bill of particular accusations, the right to subpoena witnesses and

documents where genuine security considerations permit, the right to be represented by counsel, the right to a stenographic report of proceedings, the right to a written decision, and the right of appeal." Nothing approaching these privileges has yet been provided, although President Truman stated some admirable principles aimed at putting an end to witch-hunting. The caliber of the men he has appointed to the newly created Loyalty Review Board seems to guarantee more fair play than has hitherto been practiced.

There are those who feel that employees are entitled to the protection of judicial process. Here, as in the case of the Congressional Committee controversy, a confusion exists. The judiciary has nothing to do with the protection of jobs in the Executive Department. Recourse is always possible to the Court of Claims for any citizen with a damage suit against the government. But the status of a person as an employee is vastly different from his status as a citizen.

Moreover, there is a very real problem involving national security. As was disclosed in the Canadian spy trials, the government has to contend with skilled practitioners of infiltration. A government *must* protect itself against such infiltration in the so-called sensitive agencies.

Freedom versus security

The prime question of these dangerous times is the balancing of our liberties and our security. At present we know little of what is going on in the Soviet Union. But the freedoms we enjoy are bound to work to the Soviet's advantage. Press accounts of the scientific work of our government may give valuable information to Moscow. Even reports on the direction of our research might be of inestimable benefit to the Soviet's research workers. One of the worst leaks took place during the Pearl Harbor hearing when details about the cryptograph used by our intelligence system were divulged. But we cannot solve the dilemma by sacrificing our own freedom in order to save the world's.

Some of the more scary officials are constantly seeking to shackle the press completely. Lo

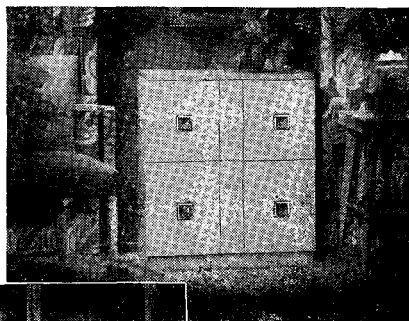
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instance, at the proposed code drawn up by the Security Advisory Board of the State and Defense Departments. In its original form this code would have forbidden the disclosure of information which "although not endangering the national security . . . would cause serious administrative embarrassment or difficulty." The only comment on this is an exclamation point. It was withdrawn when newspapers protested.

There should be better policing inside the Administration. Most of the leaks are, in fact, official releases. If the security job were centralized, then there might be an improvement. At present it is scattered. And it is incumbent on the security officials to realize that we are struggling to maintain our liberties.

Administration of the ERP

The terms of the European Recovery Program will no doubt be debated long and earnestly. The basic concept is that American aid can be effective in putting Europe on its feet only as internal stability is produced by the Europeans themselves and by the establishment of the nucleus of a working economy for Europe.

How shall American leadership be exercised? The answer to that question depends on the kind of organization that is set up and the personnel chosen to man it. The Herter Committee suggests an eight-man bipartisan corporation, subject to strict Congressional control, to manage the program. It also calls for a committee in each of the sixteen participating countries in Europe to control the spending of local currencies which the countries would get from selling American supplies to their people. Americans named by the President and acceptable to the foreign nations would sit on these committees.

Experience has shown that the ERP kind of enterprise is best managed by giving maximum authority to a single person working under a board having general responsibility.

For the position of ERP administrator in Washington, the name of Robert M. La Follette, one of the Harriman Nineteen, is frequently mentioned. He did a signal service in the drafting of the Harriman report. He has "got religion" about the historic undertaking. This is strange for the son of "Fighting Bob," the greatest isolationist of them all, and for one who rationalized as well as inherited isolationism. But the metamorphosis of "Young Bob" is no more curious than that of many of our public men, not least Senator Vandenberg.

Many internationalists were created on the legislative journeys of last summer. Perhaps the most notable was Representative Thomas A. Jenkins of Ohio. From the internationalist point of view, he has as bad a record as any in Congress. Yet, as a member of the Herter group, he wrote a report on Italy which, for broad sympathy and insistence on the American responsibility, could not have been excelled.

The Atlantic Report on Washington

For the ERP post abroad, assuming that there will be a special ambassador, Lewis W. Douglas's name is most frequently mentioned. "Lew" is a former Congressman from Arizona. He did the best job of exposition to the committees before Congress returned. The Herter Committee came back with a good word about his coöperation in London. The British like him as ambassador and friend, though they are sometimes irked by his gratuitous advice on mining, remembering that conditions in England are *sui generis* and that "Lew's" knowledge of mining has nothing to do with coal.

In the ERP assignment abroad he would be expected to give more authority to his advice. But he is equipped, as few Americans are, with the finesse to make intervention an art. He has charm as well as knowledge, though some people find his slightly deferential attitude a trifle uncomfortable. In public he is altogether different, having a somewhat pompous way of delivering himself.

Dean Acheson, Averell Harriman, and William L. Clayton all have the quality of urbanity, and have experience for one of the world's outstanding appointments. The four of them are dedicated to the mission and the spirit of the Marshall Plan.

Why trade with Russia?

A question that constantly comes to Washington is why trade continues with Soviet Russia. Both Senator Taft and Mr. Stassen have helped to foment the curiosity with their criticisms. Trade with Russia seems to some Americans the same kind of idiocy that was perpetrated when we helped to build up Japan's war machine after it had become obvious that Japan had embarked on aggression.

The answer to the question about Russia is that the trade is strictly two-way. In other words, Moscow is sending us raw materials in which we are deficient and which are critical in the maintenance of our manufacturing operations. We get chrome and manganese ores for the farm machinery, locomotives, and freight cars we send to Russia. Indeed, at the present time Russia has a small export surplus in her trade with the United States.

Senator Taft asserts that the export controls already in possession of the Administration have not been applied rigorously enough. He is probably right. American goods in short supply have been allowed to go abroad in excess quantity. And some have been going to countries which might well have been told to wait awhile. A case in point is Argentina, where President Perón is developing at double

pace an industrialization program, not only to create an economic balance in Argentina, but also to build up political power in South America.

But there is bound to be more discipline of our export trade when the Marshall Plan comes into operation. Argentina will be asked for the same kind of quid pro quo that we get from the Soviet Union. A painful impression has been created by the revelation that Argentina is charging \$5 to \$6 a bushel for wheat to the hungry nations. Under the Marshall Plan the United States would put Marshall Plan dollars at the disposal of Argentina for buying this grain. If the same price continues to be charged, there is bound to be a hullabaloo.

The Mood of the Capital

The mood of the Capital is one of realism about the Soviet Union. There are no illusions that the cold war is over. It is felt with the Harriman Committee that the "ideological war of the Communists is as ruthless and as determined a drive to achieve world domination as a hot war." There is no illusion about the strides in modern warfare made by the Soviet Union.

To be sure, the Russians lack our technological efficiency and organization. But it is not forgotten that a police state is in a position to harness men and resources without limit to the attainment of a single objective, no matter how much is sacrificed in the process. What is of chief concern is the atom bomb. Men of top scientific rating do not scoff at the report that the Russians have got the bomb. Nor do they depreciate Russian progress in other research—for instance, bacteriological warfare. That is the major reason for the general backing of the President on the Marshall Plan.

Politics arise with the entry of the question of price controls and their extent into the discussion of the Plan. If existing controls work, there will be no resurrection of the notion of consumer controls, which are now dubbed Truman politics. The President is said to have been more impressed by the verdict of the voters than by the statistics. In November prices were the great issue, and in many quarters Taft's responsibility was established for ditching controls. So the President, who a while ago associated rationing and price control with the police state, decided to rub it in. It may be that the existing controls will arrest the inflation. But if the present rate of a 16 per cent a year rise in price keeps up, price control will stay in the center of public stage, and prices will be the dominant in the Presidential election.



Atlantic Monthly and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

AWARDS FOR ATLANTIC "FIRSTS"

In these years many men and women are having their first try at writing fiction. Some of them have returned to college from the services; some of them are in business; some are venturing forth as free-lances. The *Atlantic* feels that special encouragement should be held out to all writers of promise who have not yet established themselves. Throughout 1948 we will, therefore, reserve space in each issue for *Atlantic* "Firsts" — stories by new writers.

Atlantic "Firsts" will be paid for at our top fee. And at six-month intervals the *Atlantic* editors, with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, will make two awards, the first of \$1500, the second of \$750, to the authors of those "Firsts" which we have published and which in the opinion of the *Atlantic* editors are the most promising. It should be understood that these stories will be judged as stories, and that MGM, like the *Atlantic*, is primarily interested in discovering and advancing the work of new writers. Neither one-act plays nor scenarios will be eligible for these awards. But if there are film possibilities in the prize winners, MGM will have the option to buy any of them at \$5000 each.

Candidates for *Atlantic* "Firsts" may run between 2000 and 20,000 words. The prize winners will be selected from the "Firsts" published in each six-month calendar period, January to June, and July to December, and the judgment of the editors will be final. The words "*Atlantic First*" must appear on the first page of each manuscript submitted.

(The *Atlantic* "Firsts" contest will be continued through 1948.)

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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The Far East

BRTAIN, in spite of dollar-hunger and trouble in Europe, has made a hardheaded and skillfully executed comeback in Asia. The diversity of British policy in different countries in Asia has led many to think that it is mere opportunism. It is not. It is in part the product of systematic thinking, stemming from the Fabian Society. In part it is a product of the Tory tradition that when a retreat has become inevitable, it is better to withdraw gracefully, just in time to give the impression of a voluntary agreement.

Churchill, in his attitude toward the inevitable, is of course a defiant Tory heretic. In the debate in Parliament on the agreement by which Burma becomes a republic — not even a dominion — he said bitterly of the late U Aung San, nationalist leader of Burma, “I had not expected to see him, his hands dyed in British blood and the blood of loyal Burmese, march up the steps of Buckingham Palace as the plenipotentiary of the Burmese Government.”

It is true that U Aung San was both a political and a military collaborator of the Japanese. The attitude of the Labor Government toward him is an instructive combination of the British gift for pastel shadings in legal definitions and the British talent for closing a deal while the closing is good.

In dealing with U Aung San and his like, the British Government rules that if a man who is not a citizen but an unwilling subject collaborated with the enemy not solely for his personal advantage but with undeniable popular backing, and if later he turns up to negotiate with the British, still with a popular backing that cannot be wooed away from him, then he must be dealt with not as a personal quisling but as a representative of his people.

Burma, as an independent republic, will have a status somewhere between that of the Philippines as an American satellite and that of Outer Mongolia as a Soviet satellite. It will be a multi-national state, in which the British have helped to negotiate a favorable status for such minority peoples as the Shans, Karens, Chins, and Kachins. They will have a free voice in the federal government, while

the power of the federal government to intervene in their territorial affairs will be constitutionally limited.

The new republic will stand outside of “His Majesty’s protection”; which means that the British are neither obligated to provide protection nor entitled to insist on offering protection; but British troops can be called back into Burma if both Burmans and British agree that security requires it. The British expect that the Burmans, having won maximum political concessions, will now lean heavily on them not only for military protection but for economic and technical aid.

The French hesitate

In Indo-China and Indonesia the French and the Dutch still doggedly deny both the British practice and the principle behind it. Ho Chi Minh of Viet Nam is conspicuously a man trained in the French tradition and the French culture. The political rights he has taught his people to demand are those which Frenchmen regard as the minimum definition not merely of freedom but of self-respect.

He turned toward Moscow years ago, following a gradually unfolding historical change: the French rule in Indo-China, after a period in which it had made the best French ideals available to the best minds of Indo-China, had barred the application of those ideals to the people of Indo-China as a whole. As it hardened from permitting equality for the few into prohibiting freedom for the many, French rule converted itself into “a machine for manufacturing Communists.”

The French cannot move with assurance in Indo-China until the de Gaulle problem is settled at home. De Gaulle in power would reach out with a firm hand to the French Empire; but de Gaulle on his way to power might shake France and ruin the effort to reconquer Indo-China.

These are questions that test the political acumen of Bao Dai, deposed Emperor of Annam, who after a period of good relations with the Viet Nam nationalists is now a political refugee in Hong Kong. He is dickering with the French, but his estimate of



The Atlantic Report on the Far East



the situation can be gauged by the fact that he is holding out for much more real power and real independence than the French are willing to concede; and it is for this reason that the Viet Nam nationalists, though wary of claiming him as their own, have not denounced him.

Dutch squeeze

In trying to evade the issues of twentieth-century colonial politics the Dutch, like the French, have been forced back on nineteenth-century principles of action. In their "police action," begun in July, they seized key points, lines of communication, and sources of raw materials, and gambled heavily on what used to be a reliable axiom — the assumption that in order to avoid being reduced to the level of the peasantry and the coolies, many educated natives capable of leadership, administration, and management would knuckle under and serve as auxiliaries.

The Dutch seemed at first, by their bold police action, to have turned the trick. They attained their announced objectives with what looked like shattering ease. The Indonesians were incompetent even in scorching the earth. Large stockpiles of rubber and other valuables fell into Dutch hands. Shipment of these spoils to America appeared to confirm that everything was under control.

But when the Dutch tried to force political recognition of their military victories the Indonesians hung on. The "details" of mopping up are beginning to seem more important than the "decisive" victories of July and August; and the Indonesians still hold oil fields they could severely damage.

The Indonesians are reacting as the Chinese did in 1937 in the face of Japanese aggression. They insist that before they will negotiate, the Dutch must withdraw to the lines from which they jumped off. Nationalist prestige is rising beyond the territory actually held by the Indonesian Republic. The indications point to a long period of confusion, with the Dutch squeezed between resistance in the territories which they do not control and rising demands on them, backed by increasing restlessness among the people, in the regions which they do control.

The U.S. subsidizes Japan

Farther north in Asia, American preoccupation with the problem of Russia continues to prevent the consideration of the problems of Japan, Korea, and China on their own merits. In Japan, the current is running to the right in the policies of the Japanese government, while an undertow is setting to the

left in the labor movement. Both sides agree on the main premise: the test will come when the Americans go.

This dual trend reflects the personality of General MacArthur. More than any other American proconsul — as he showed long ago in the Philippines — he has a sure instinct for the controls of power in a system of indirect government. The sensitivity of his fingertips to the feel of power is not matched by an equally sensitive tingling in his toes to warn him when there is danger of tripping over economic obstacles.

Japan's industrial recovery is an illusion. The country is living on an American dole. Japan's lopsided economy used to be kept up by blood transfusions from Formosa, China, Manchuria, and Korea. This tribute is now cut off, not only by Japan's loss of empire but by economic chaos, civil war, and political paralysis.

Even America, which took that empire away, cannot now coördinate its resources with Japan's economy. The operations of the U.S. Commodity Credit Corporation, shipments under the War Department budget, and other dollar transactions, combined with an admittedly arbitrary dollar-yen exchange rate, make it impossible to state the relationship between costs of imported raw materials, labor, and other manufacturing costs added in Japan, and the true competitive price of finished Japanese products.

When the occupation ends, America will have to decide whether to move from hidden subsidy of Japan to open subsidy, for political reasons. In an unsubsidized Japan there would be an immediate demand that the industrialists and landowners pay a far larger share of the costs of Japan's fall from empire than they have yet had to pay. Such demands could only be made effective through a farmer-labor alliance, which is the aim of the leftists in the Japanese labor movement. Translate "farmer-labor" into "workers and peasants," and Japan will be swung right into the clash between the American fear of Russian-backed revolution and the Russian dogma that all regimes backed or subsidized by America are proof of America's imperialist expansion.

Deadlock in Korea

In Korea the clash is already undisguised. The strength of the American position is that large numbers of Koreans who do not like the present American political nominees are vaguely but deeply



The Atlantic Report on the Far East



afraid of what might happen if the Russians and their friends were to take over.

The weakness of the American position is that the well-meant policy of encouraging private enterprise has encouraged a runaway black market. The black market has spread even into politics. Koreans are bitter about the men who played right along with the Japanese and are now active in American-sponsored politics. They are especially bitter about the way the Japanese-trained police, the most conspicuous traitors in Korea, have been retained and strengthened.

The weakness of the Russians is their weakness in every country they dominate. They live off the country — if not entirely, at least much more, and much more conspicuously, than the Americans do. They are hated by the former propertied classes, dreaded by most of the intermediate class of clerks, civil servants, shopkeepers, and small-scale employers like city tailors and housebuilders, and feared even by peasants who are rich enough to employ hired hands. Their strength is among industrial workers and miners, among peasants who have received land of their own, and among those technicians, bureaucrats, and management personnel who have been given more power and responsibility than the Japanese ever allowed them.

In the United Nations, we have now won a vote-victory over the Russians on our proposal for internationally supervised elections before withdrawing troops. The Russian proposal was to withdraw troops and leave the Koreans to themselves. The Russians, though outvoted, can boycott the American-sponsored procedure and keep the international observers out of Northern Korea.

The deadlock could be broken if the Russians should have sufficient confidence in the Korean army they have trained, to withdraw and leave it on its own. That would confront us with something like the Kuomintang-Communist situation in China, with the difference that in South Korea there does not yet exist, for us to back, a political and military organization with even as much cohesion as the Kuomintang, which has proved so inadequate in China.

No coalition in China

The situation in China is growing more and more discouraging. The Kuomintang troops, even with some degree of continuing American training and support, look more like factional armies and less like a national army with every month that passes.

The Communist forces are steadily hardening from guerrillas and militia levies into regular armies with good staff work and formidable American artillery, captured from the Kuomintang. Increasingly frequent purges on the Kuomintang side, affecting men of high military rank and political prominence, contrast with the fact that even the Chinese government propaganda is unable to claim the defection of important Communist leaders.

In Washington, Secretary Marshall has let it be known that he does not agree with parts of the report of General Wedemeyer, formerly one of his brightest military brain-trusters and recently the President's hand-picked envoy to bring back the facts on China. The disagreement is part of a double conflict of views, between two groups of American experts in China and between the Administration and a Republican group in Washington. In China, one American view is that by and large the Chinese themselves must settle who has the tickle and who has the washee, and that America can influence the outcome but not predetermine it.

According to this view, the outcome must be a compromise, which means a coalition government, in which American influence can somewhat weight the Kuomintang representation but cannot freely dictate the proportions. This view is detectable in the Marshall Report of nearly a year ago, which pointed to an American policy of waiting until the stubborn Chinese rivals are again ready for mediation. The other view is that America can and should get behind the Kuomintang and push it to a victory which it is too limp to reach on its own legs.

Marshall gives way on China

Marshall has promised 300 million dollars to China, in installments of 20 million dollars a month, beginning next April. Marshall agreed to this expenditure in spite of his expressed opinion that there is "no firm basis" for rehabilitation in China while inflation is out of control and the civil war is devouring 75 to 80 per cent of the government's income. He gave way in the face of Republican pressure typified by Vandenberg's warning that "many members of Congress will consider the foreign aid program one-legged" unless China is included.

Policy in China has thus been transferred from the field of the expert on the Far East to that of the expert on Washington. The shadow of partisanship, in a presidential election year, eclipses the issue of soundness of judgment on what is actually happening in China.



Canada

THE austerity program announced by the Canadian government on November 17 brings home to the United States the seriousness of the world economic crisis. Canada suffers from the same dollar shortage that has convulsed the rest of the world. Canada is a country rich in resources, production, and export surpluses; nevertheless, she is unable to pay for her purchases in the United States.

Traditionally Canada sold her surplus food to Europe, principally Great Britain. She received payment in dollars which the European countries earned on their foreign investments and from the export of colonial products to the United States, such as tea and sisal from India, tin and rubber from Malaya. European countries, Britain in particular, no longer enjoy such dollar income. Moreover, they do not export enough of their own products to the United States. Hence they do not have the U.S. dollars with which to pay Canada.

Unable to receive payment in dollars for her European exports, unable even to secure needed manufactured goods and coal from across the seas, Canada has been importing from the United States in prodigious amounts, at the rate of nearly 2 billion dollars a year. She exports an equal amount or more, much of it to soft-currency Europe. Thus she is in the position of a grocer who has a great many worthy customers in need, who are too poor to pay, but she is required to meet her obligations to her suppliers promptly, and in cash.

Just before leaving for the gathering of the Board of Governors of the International Bank and Monetary Fund in London last fall, Minister of Finance Douglas C. Abbott stated that unless the situation was restored by which Canada could pay for her imports from the United States by her exports to Europe, radical changes in the entire economic structure of the country would have to be made. The announcement of November 17 is the first step in this direction.

Foreign-trade boom

Canadian imports and exports are three times higher than before the war and in 1947 surpassed even the best years of the war period. As in the

case of the United States, however, Canada's export boom is artificially stimulated. Graham F. Towers, Governor of the Bank of Canada, estimates that one third of Canada's 2.3-billion-dollar exports in 1946 were financed by her credit program. In proportion to her population and national income, Canada has been even more generous than the United States in extending aid to Europe, to Great Britain in particular.

In addition to wartime credits and mutual-aid grants, Canada has extended 1857 million dollars in post-war loans, of which 1250 millions went to Britain. Furthermore, 273 millions were given in post-war relief. Upon his return from London, Finance Minister Abbott stated on October 11 that he could not see any possibility that Canada would be able to extend any further credits while her trade balance with the United States continued to show a large deficit.

During the war Canada exported to England under credits and mutual-aid programs, but received the necessary dollars from the United States under the 1941 Hyde Park Agreement between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Mackenzie King, to pool productive resources of the two countries for the prosecution of the war. The United States placed large orders for manufacturing and raw materials in Canada, thereby putting dollars into her hands for purchases in the United States.

In addition, such large-scale construction projects as Canol, the Alaskan Highway, and the Shipshaw power and aluminum plants, built with United States money, increased Canada's dollar supply by hundreds of millions. As a result Canada reached the end of the war with substantial dollar balances. But this nest egg would not last beyond the spring of 1948 at the 1947 rate of a billion-dollar deficit in the commodity trade balance.

Austerity, Canadian style

The King government, under the able guidance of Finance Minister Douglas C. Abbott and Minister of Reconstruction C. D. Howe, took the only possible sane measures to ameliorate a financial situation that was rapidly deteriorating. The measures



The Atlantic Report on Canada



adopted, though far from solving the fundamental unbalance of trade, will give Canada a breathing spell.

The program announced by Prime Minister King and Finance Minister Abbott on November 17 contains many present restrictions beribboned with hopeful promises of constructive measures to come. First, absolute import prohibitions have been imposed on a long list of consumers' goods purchased in the United States: all automobiles, refrigerators, radios, jewelry, candy, typewriters, washing machines, furniture, and a host of others.

Secondly, another large group of commodities bought from the States is put under quota restriction — the amount that can be imported is limited in quantity. Although all imports of out-of-season fruits are prohibited, oranges, grapefruit, lemons, fruit juices, potatoes, apples, and onions are under quota limitation. All textiles (except raw materials and yarns), all leather goods, timepieces, cutlery, sporting goods, and smokers' supplies are similarly limited. The quotas are set at twice the value of pre-war imports except for textiles, where the quota is four times the pre-war value of imports.

There will be strict control over imports of capital goods also, which are placed under licensing by the Ministry of Reconstruction. As most industrial expansion would require some form of imported U.S. machinery, this puts the direction of investment virtually under the government's control.

Canadian tourist expenditures are also limited to \$150 per year to each person desiring to travel in U.S. dollar areas. Furthermore, extremely heavy taxes are imposed on durable consumer goods produced in Canada which use component parts manufactured in the United States. This affects, for instance, cars assembled in Canada with parts imported from across the border. It will also apply to motorcycles, oil burners, cameras, radios, phonographs, and most types of electric appliances for the home. The purpose is to discourage the importation of parts and to encourage the establishment of completely integrated manufacturing within the country.

Gold subsidy

Oddly enough, the only step taken to increase exports to the United States is a \$7 per ounce subsidy for gold production in excess of the amount produced during the year ending June 30, 1947. This industry, according to Minister of Finance Abbott, has unutilized capacity and "produces a

commodity for which there is unlimited dollar market." The subsidy amounts to a 20 per cent increase in price to the marginal producer and rectifies the 10 per cent reduction in price that hit the Canadian producer when the Canadian dollar was revalued from 90 cents to one U.S. dollar in 1946. It also compensates for increased costs of production.

Concurrently with the announcement of these steps, admittedly temporary in nature, there was also released the news that the U.S. Export-Import Bank had agreed to extend a 300-million-dollar loan, available until December 31, 1948. This loan, together with savings of 200 to 300 million dollars resulting from the limitations on purchases in the United States, will enable the Canadian government to rectify its net adverse balance of payment of about 500 millions a year. This will control the situation until the end of 1948. After that more basic solutions will have to be found to redress the unbalanced economic relations between the two countries.

The long, hard pull

There are three long-term remedies which occupy Canadian thought at the present time. First, there is a wish for more self-sufficiency in the field of manufactured goods, by encouraging the processing of raw materials into finished products by home industry, thus curtailing the necessity of imports from the United States. It is hoped that some of the restrictions will achieve this result.

Secondly, the most agreeable remedy will be to sell more goods to the United States. The announcement of tariff reductions under the Geneva Agreements has stirred Canada to new hope in this direction. The tariff on wheat, for instance, is reduced from 42 cents to 21 cents, and the limitation on quantity is removed. Tariffs have been reduced, in most cases by 50 per cent, and U.S. quotas have been enlarged or eliminated on such products as fresh and frozen salmon and halibut, meat and dairy products, whiskey, gin, wheat flour, poultry, and all kinds of wood products.

There is a hope in Canada that the United States will go even further and reduce tariffs below the levels allowed by the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. This, of course, will run squarely into Congressional phobias.

Iron and lumber for export

The new discoveries of iron ore in Quebec and Labrador promise the largest source of this vital



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raw material since the discovery of the Mesabi deposit in Minnesota. Preliminary explorations of this ore body have gone far enough to invite both Canadian and United States governmental and industrial interest. The United States needs Canadian ore desperately, and the new mines open up challenging opportunities for investment of United States capital.

To ship this ore to the Middle Western steel mills, the St. Lawrence Seaway must be constructed. Canadian Minister of Transport Lionel Chevrier made it quite clear to the United States House Public Works Committee visiting Cornwall on September 16 that Canada is still waiting, after fifteen years, for the United States to carry out its bargain in developing this essential watershed. It is also hoped, of course, that Canada will get some dollar exchange in the construction of the Seaway through the employment of Canadian labor and talent.

As for lumber and plywood, a sustained housing program in the United States would continue to demand large Canadian exports. At present 35 per cent of output is set aside for Britain, and 50 per cent for Canadian consumption, leaving only 15 per cent for exports to all other countries, including the United States. Increase in total output, and revision in these percentages, should result in improving the dollar position of Canada.

Marshall plan helps Canada

Wheat, which is Canada's principal export surplus, is competitive with U.S. export interests, and the best market for it is in Europe. For this reason, Canadian authorities are as much interested in the success of the Marshall Plan as the Europeans, for in the Marshall Plan they see an immediate means of dollar receipts for their exports to Europe, provided Congress will allow Marshall Plan appropriations to be spent in other countries. If the Marshall Plan is successful, Canada may obtain payment for her exports by increased imports of manufactured products from Europe.

A third and final program, much more drastic and fundamental, is being talked about in Canada among the younger officials and economists, more by way of speculation in case the long-range rehabilitation of Europe does not materialize: a planned migration and increase in the population of Canada, mainly from the British Isles, so that the agricultural surplus will have a home market, and the whole Great Lakes-St. Lawrence valley, which can easily support two or three times its present population of eight million people, will have an ample labor supply for the development of natural resources and provide a mass market for home-produced manufactures.

The various pieces of the very complex national policy which Canada is fashioning fit together into a long-range program which shows solid and consistent thought and is a credit to what is perhaps the best-managed democracy on earth.

ATLANTIC

Repartee

LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

The Atlantic's Ninetieth

SIR:

I have not failed to sit down with your wonderful Ninetieth Anniversary issue (November, 1947). Of course, I was excited about the miraculous collection of material which you have got together.

My further comment would be about the format, as anything W. A. Dwiggins touches is good. The type page could hardly be bettered. You must be able to get a vast amount of material on these pages. I like the occasional shift from the decorative head to the type head. I also like the open letters on the contents page and the script letters in the Repartee heading. This helps to avoid monotony.

You have given the whole product a great lift by picking up this anniversary as a point of departure and I congratulate you and the magazine.

FREDERIC G. MELCHER
Publishers' Weekly
New York City

SIR:

I am proud to be on the list of recipients of your Ninetieth Anniversary issue, and I wish to add my congratulations and best wishes to the many you have received. If I could find any fault with your regime, I would say that I think at times you have mistaken loud professions of "liberalism" for the real article.

ARTHUR KROCK
New York Times, Washington Bureau
Washington, D.C.

SIR:

My hearty congratulations to you, your staff, and W. A. Dwiggins on the

Ninetieth Anniversary issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. It is an outstanding job.

BENNETT CERF
Random House
New York City

SIR:

Fine and Dandy is the name for it. This reader was moved by the deeply human self-portrait of General Patton; instructed by the information of Fred Allen; worried by Einstein's fears; and forgetful of all else when Sir Osbert talks. As a net result I should say that you have made your celebration of 100 years well-nigh impossible.

ELLERY SEDGWICK
Beverly, Mass.

SIR:

After a compelling, fascinated reading I can only say that your Ninetieth Anniversary number is just about the finest single issue of any magazine I have ever seen.

Just about? Hell, it is!

WILLIAM C. LENGEL
Executive Editor, Today's Woman
New York City

SIR:

I heartily congratulate you on the Ninetieth Anniversary number. I still think that Dwiggins's most dignified type page carries a little too much material for the easiest reading, but I gladly admit that this opposition to much popular current practice may be a good thing and stamp the magazine with originality.

As for content, it is superb. I have sampled much of it, but it is like a good book that I intend to keep by

me until I have read it all. I am not at all certain that those letters of Mark Twain do not belong to the great letters of literature. This cannot be said for most of his letters, but these in their revealing quality, in their sincerity, and in their twists of meaning, of which Mark himself I'm sure was often not aware, are extraordinary.

HENRY S. CANBY
Saturday Review of Literature
New York City

SIR:

This is just a note to congratulate you on the new format of the *Atlantic*. It is most attractive.

I am glad to know, too, that I may continue to enjoy the same character which the magazine has built up over the years, and I look forward to interesting reading in the months to come.

CHARLES LUCKMAN
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR:

It's wonderfully varied and all of it first-class. It was a remarkable feat to get all this together and it's very worthy of the *Atlantic*.

GRENVILLE CLARK
Dublin, N.H.

SIR:

You have done a swell job in making the *Atlantic* really easy to read. Personally I have never seen the wisdom of making anything hard to read, with the exception perhaps of things that sharp dealers don't want people to read.

BASIL L. WALTERS
Executive Editor, Knight Newspapers, Inc.
Chicago, Ill.

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Yes indeed! warm hospitality and an old fashion welcome await you in the comfortable modern inns and hotels of Québec. Brilliant mountain sunshine, dry invigorating cold, ideal snow conditions assure a perfect winter vacation. Write Provincial Tourist Bureau, Parliament Bldgs., Québec City, Canada.

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SIR:

The old order changeth — and definitely for the better! Congratulations on the Ninetieth Anniversary issue, on the new format, and the ever youthful spirit of your "committee on new traditions."

M. LINCOLN SCHUSTER
*Simon and Schuster
New York City*

SIR:

I am delighted to see the *New Atlantic*. I think it has been greatly improved.

GARDNER COWLES
*President and Editor, Look
New York City*

The Red Cross

SIR:

Congratulations on "An Open Letter to Mr. Basil O'Connor," by Robert Cutler in the October *Atlantic*. In my judgment the American Red Cross deserves better than the unhappy result which will flow from the empirical attitudes of its Central Committee. These attitudes give too little weight to the husbanding of working and giving potentials in our towns. Beyond that, gratuitous criticism of labor and management participation in Red Cross drives seems unwise.

As the manager of a business in which a combined solicitation has been successfully conducted for several years, I was informed that the Red Cross could not further be included. This in spite of a plan which carefully preserved the identity of the Red Cross. We faced a dilemma. The Central Committee has said it must have its own campaign. My employees want one annual campaign for all approved philanthropies. Regretfully therefore the Red Cross was excluded from our campaign this fall.

There will be no independent campaign in our company for the Red Cross. This is so because the judgment of the people at the local level must prevail. This same situation obtains in a number of Philadelphia companies. As a friend of the Red Cross it shocks me that the local chapter can exercise no independent judgment.

E. A. ROBERTS
*President, Fidelity Mutual Life Ins. Co.
Philadelphia, Pa.*

SIR:

I have read with great interest "An Open Letter to Mr. Basil O'Connor."

I recall so well the occasion when we made our presentation to the Red Cross officials in Washington as to their dealings with Community Chests in general. From the cold reception we received and the dogmatic statements made to us, evidently Mr. O'Connor takes the same attitude as did his predecessor. Sooner or later a change will be up to Mr. O'Connor in his attitude as head of the Red Cross, that quasi-governmental institution.

HENRY D. SHARPE
Providence, R.I.

SIR:

As one who helped start the Community Chest in this small city and who has worked continuously for it for fifteen years, I want to thank Robert Cutler for his "Open Letter to Mr. Basil O'Connor."

Mr. O'Connor's criticism of the Community Chest fund-raising plan is inexplicable to me. It contradicts absolutely our experience here and the experience of other places. Before the Chest was started in Englewood, fewer than 500 people contributed to the local services of the place. Charity was indeed "the exclusive preserve of the rich." In our first campaign we had over 3000 contributors, and last year almost 6000 gave and worked for the joint fund-raising. Volunteers come from every part of the town, friendliness and neighborliness have increased, and we have all received an intensive education in the operation of our local agencies. People care and know how their money is going to be spent, which is certainly a democratic procedure in any enterprise.

At the outset we were told that certain citizens had "pet charities" (odious phrase!) which they had originated, and that they would be unwilling to help a common fund. This dismal prophecy has been refuted again and again. Different people have different interests, of course (I trust such diversity in devotion will always exist), but we have learned to coöperate for the good of all. If I seem to be quoting Mr. Cutler's letter, it is only because he has stated so clearly the fine results that flow from the joint fund-raising method.

My old home is Cleveland, and I have always been proud that she started the Community Chest plan. I have followed the campaigns there, in Northampton, Massachusetts, and in Boston.

MRS. DWIGHT W. MORROW
Englewood, N.J.

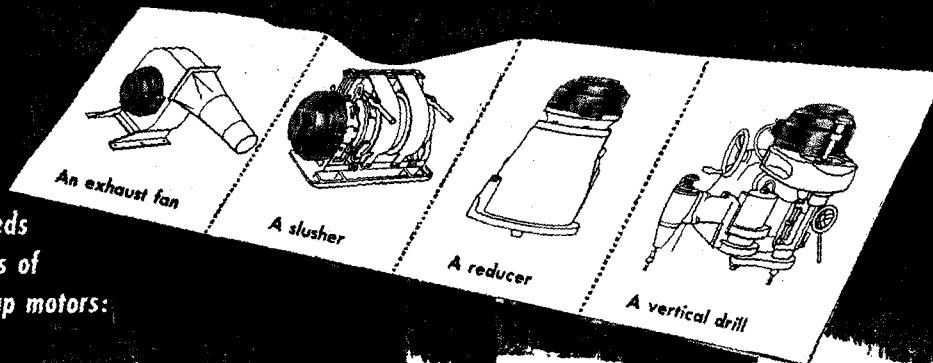
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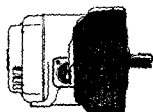
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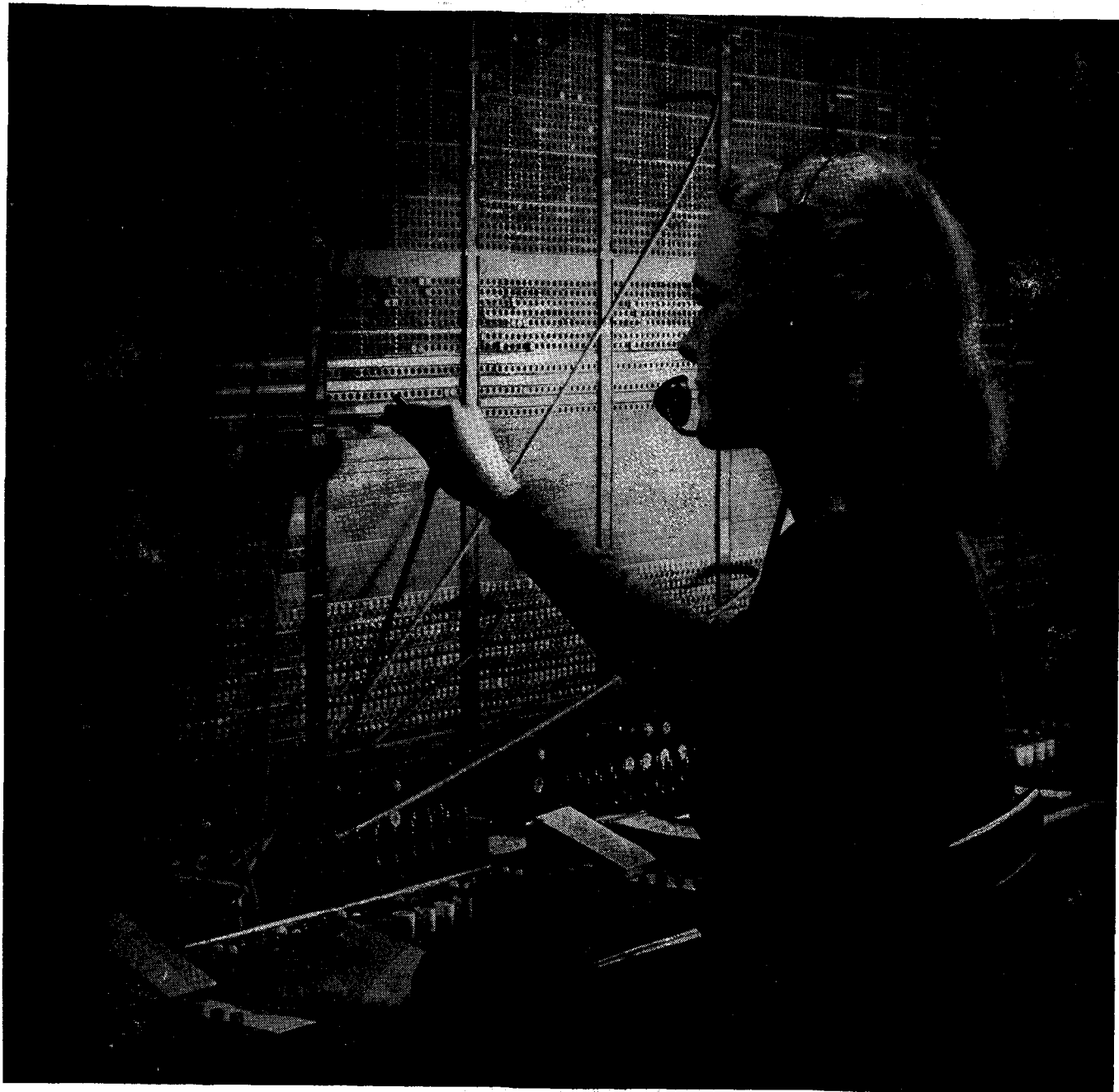
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***Bell Telephone service isn't a 9 to 5 service.
It is one of the few services in the world that
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Waste and misdirection still balk American efforts to solve the world's food crisis: our production of food is ill chosen; too much of our grain is fed to cattle; we eat far more than we should; we throw huge quantities of food away. DR. FREDRICK J. STARE is one of our foremost authorities on nutrition. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin and received his M.D. from the University of Chicago School of Medicine. Editor of Nutrition Reviews, he is Head of the Department of Nutrition at Harvard University.

FIASCO IN FOOD

by FREDRICK J. STARE

OUR mounting anxiety over food — the distribution, the cost, the quantity and quality of food — has led this country to attempt an appraisal of its food potential. Now we are readying ourselves to distribute food to others on the most generous scale in history. This is an emergency effort and one that must succeed. But have we taken hold of the problem in the most practical way?

The main purpose of food is nutrition. The shortage of food is primarily a shortage of calories. What has our government done to tell the individual — the farmer, the distributor, restaurant owner, housewife — how to achieve the maximum nutrition from the resources at our command?

Even in this unprecedented crisis, our production of food is wasteful and misdirected. Agitating for meatless and eggless days is impractical; they will save some food while larger wastes continue. Decreasing alcohol production from edible grains yields relatively small returns. Why ask the distilling industry to save eight or ten million bushels of grain while many times that amount is squandered on unnecessary fattening of animals? As recently as October, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees were hearing proposals from the Department of Agriculture for a national farm policy of "sustained abundance," with the chief emphasis on increasing meat production.

What have food committees told the public about

the two other main wastes of food: overeating as a national habit and our enormous destruction of food via the garbage can? What has it done to abolish politically inspired laws which limit human consumption of highly nutritive margarine and skimmed milk products? Can we afford to put business considerations ahead of calories? The fate not only of political parties but of government structure itself in many parts of the world hangs in the balance.

Man and animals compete for nature's food. Basically, energy from food comes from the sun through the process of photosynthesis in plants. Hence the amount of food energy available depends on the amount of soil cultivated and its productivity. The following table of the amounts of fertile land required to produce one million calories from each of various foods shows the relative efficiency of production of human food calories: —

Food Source	Acres of Land
Sugar.....	0.15
Potatoes.....	0.44
Corn — as corn meal.....	0.9
Wheat — as whole wheat flour.....	0.9
Wheat — as refined wheat flour.....	1.2
Hogs (pork and lard).....	2.0
Whole milk.....	2.8
Eggs.....	7.0
Chickens.....	9.3
Steers.....	17.0

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It takes far more land to provide calories from eggs, chicken, and beef than from the other sources listed.

Sugar is highly efficient in terms of calories and land. Refined sugar is practically a pure chemical substance and as such does not contribute minerals, vitamins, and protein, as do most other foods. In a world short of calories it might be worth while to investigate the possibilities of fortifying sugar with some of the essential nutrients available from cheap sources.

Enriched basic foods like enriched flour and iodized salt, and fortified foods like milk with added vitamin D and margarine with added vitamin A, are intelligent advances in public health. But economically it is foolish to take most of the vitamins out of flour in refining it, so as to make it "white and pure," and then to purchase synthetic vitamins and put them back in.

However lamentable may be the thinking that led us to this strange game, the replacement of the lost nutrients is essential from the viewpoint of improved public health and preventive medicine. Yet only twenty-odd states have laws requiring enrichment of white flour.

The cost of synthetic vitamins that can be used to enrich or fortify basic foods has decreased steadily in the last half-dozen years, whereas the cost of food has gone up and up. It is now cheaper to get most of the vitamins from synthetic sources than from food. The vitamin C in an orange costs much more than the equivalent amount from vitamin C tablets. Low-cost, *low-potency* vitamin capsules, if intelligently used, can make a poor diet nutritionally adequate at minimum cost in these days of high prices for meat, milk, and eggs.

Animal foods are the best sources of many of the forty to fifty nutrients we need besides calories, but in a serious shortage of calories, the production of animal food products certainly must be curtailed. There is one exception: whole milk has unusually good nutritive value and every effort should be made to increase whole milk production. Whole milk contains its fat, as distinct from skimmed milk, from which the fat has been separated to be made into butter. This skimmed milk contains most of the nutrients of whole milk, yet less than half of it finds its way directly into human consumption. Most of it is used in animal feeding.

We must try to increase human consumption of skimmed milk. Powdered skimmed milk can be used in breads, soups, and ice cream. Further, a vegetable fat and a source of vitamin A can be added to it, making what is commonly called a "filled milk" — a procedure which is prohibited by law.

Many necessities of life depend on animal products — for example, shoes and insulin. So there are considerations other than calories. But excessive fattening of animals does not produce more hide or more insulin, only more meat.

Vast amounts of food would be saved if Americans were to eat less of the caloric foods and consume more fruit and vegetables instead. Most Americans eat too many calories for their own good, even in a world suffering from a shortage of calories; yet from a variety of sources, we know that per capita food consumption in the United States has increased about 17 per cent during the last seven years. This increase in food consumption is largely in animal food products, which because of the large number of grain calories required to produce them means that the total human and animal consumption of food calories has increased far above 17 per cent.

Most Americans overeat. Excess weight is the enemy of good health and can quickly reach obesity. Obesity increases susceptibility to diabetes, gall bladder disease, hardening of the arteries, high blood pressure, kidney disease, gout, chronic bronchitis, and makes people poorer surgical risks.

Life insurance records in the early 1920's showed that individuals who conformed closely throughout adulthood to the average weight for any given height at age thirty had the lowest death rate. In later years the age level at which average weight is ideal has decreased somewhat and now is age twenty-five.

Variety in choice of foods is good practical nutrition because it helps us to get all of the forty to fifty nutrients we need. Here are a few specific suggestions: —

1. Eat a good breakfast. It is important. Generally the body has been without food for twelve hours before breakfast, and the morning is usually a time of activity, so start the day off with adequate nourishment.

2. If you have dinner in the evening, eat a light lunch at noon. If dinner comes at midday, eat a light supper. Don't eat two dinners a day.

3. Eat more foods which contain a high proportion of water, such as fruits and vegetables.

It is probably fair to say that one fourth of all edible food purchased in the United States is wasted. This includes the food that goes back to the kitchen from restaurant tables; the fresh, useful scraps which fill the garbage can instead of the soup kettle or stewpot. To save this fourth would approximate, in terms of the 1946 retail monetary value of food purchases, 5.9 billion dollars' worth of food. If we did no more than halve this figure, we would make an enormous contribution to the food needs of the world.

We need government controls to decrease grain used in animal feeding, except where the feeding aids production of whole milk, and we can expect little results in that direction on a voluntary basis.

We need an educational campaign to help us eat to our ideal weight, which for most of us means to consume fewer calories.

More than anything, we must embrace the concept that food is vital not because it is an element in our economy, but because it nourishes us.

Stalled

Resistance to new ideas, fear of experiment, reliance on ancient formulas, have brought American radio almost to a standstill. Its comedy was borrowed from vaudeville, its drama from the films and theater. The broadcaster would rather imitate a safe old scheme than generate a new one. More leadership by the broadcasters and less control by advertisers is the cure proposed by JOHN CROSBY, whose syndicated column "Radio in Review" is the most widely read commentary in its field.

RADIO AND WHO MAKES IT

by JOHN CROSBY

1

THE broadcasting industry today is in the intellectual purgatory from which the motion picture industry only recently escaped. It has become so fashionable to condemn radio in the most sweeping terms, that the broadcasters have become genuinely alarmed. Some of this scorn may be dismissed as intellectual dishonesty on the part of the critics, but a good deal of it is the direct fault of the broadcasters themselves.

The broadcasting industry has plenty of money which fails to satisfy its craving for respectability. Radio would like to worm its way into the high society of the arts, where it could rub elbows with literature and the theater. In pursuit of this aim, the broadcasters will spend a lot of money on, let us say, the New York Philharmonic. But these large and expensive gestures in the general direction of culture have only temporary effect. In spite of them, radio's social position remains low — lower even than the movies, which is about as far down as the social ladder goes.

The reasons for radio's comparative lack of standing among the arts are fairly simple. Broadcasting is partly an editorial, partly an educational, and partly an entertainment medium. Yet its key executives are not showmen or editors or educators. William S. Paley, chairman of the board of the Columbia Broadcasting System, was a young, talented, energetic, and rich promoter who parlayed nineteen second-rate stations into the second most formidable radio network in this country. Niles Trammell, president of the National Broadcasting Company, started his business career as a salesman of RCA radio equipment. He joined NBC as a salesman and he is still fundamentally a salesman. Mark Woods, president of the American Broadcasting Company, was an accountant with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company before he got into radio in the financial department of WEAf in New York. He was vice-president and treasurer of NBC before becoming president of ABC, and most of his experience has been in finance rather than show busi-

ness. Edgar Kobak, president of the Mutual Broadcasting System, is a former vice-president in charge of sales at NBC and a former vice-president of the old Lord and Thomas advertising agency. He is primarily a salesman and advertising expert.

It was perhaps logical and possibly inevitable that these shrewd, high-powered businessmen should have wound up on top of a fledgling and highly competitive business which had few precedents to guide it. But it is neither logical nor inevitable that their policies and outlook should remain unchanged over so many years. The idea still is to land the account and never mind what sort of program the account brings in. Broadcasting, in fact, is a lot like the soap industry, where the manufacturing executives play second fiddle to the sales staff. There would be nothing intrinsically wrong with this if broadcasting had anything in common with the soap industry. But it hasn't. Broadcasters operate in the public domain; they do not own the ether; they are merely allowed to use it by the public who are its rightful owners and should be its beneficiaries.

"I will not do anything that will reduce the value of radio as an advertising medium," Niles Trammell remarked vehemently in a recent interview. He was speaking of the task of raising the cultural level of programs. It's a significant remark and one that could not conceivably be made by a good editor or a good showman.

"The broadcasters are only interested in selling time," Fred Allen, one of radio's most biting critics, remarked once. "The advertisers are only interested in selling their products. No one is interested in the show or the actor." Or, he might have added, the public.

The broadcasters have only the most remote connection with the programs they broadcast, almost all of which are handed to them intact by the advertising agency. The advertisers not only support broadcasting, they control it. The American public has become so thoroughly accustomed to

this curious state of affairs that it no longer questions it.

Suppose newspapers or magazines, which are supported by advertising just like radio, were run in the same way. The editors would sell, let us say, to Procter and Gamble not only space to advertise but also several columns of white space to fill with any editorial matter they chose. Let's assume P. and G. decided on Walter Lippmann to fill the space. If Mr. Lippmann failed to sell soap in sufficient quantities, he would be dropped forthwith and his place would be taken by some more popular feature — say, "Superman."

If the advertisers took over the nation's press in that way, there would be an immediate bellow of indignation from the public. Yet, curiously, there has never been much outcry over the advertisers' control of the air waves, which are public property, not private property like a newspaper.

2

TO GIVE the advertisers their due, American commercial broadcasting has a variety and sheer opulence found nowhere else in the world. There is virtually nothing you can't hear on the air (except profanity). We have our choice of the world's finest symphonies or Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge. We can listen to the nation's deepest thinkers or to some of the world's most inane masters of ceremonies. But the poor far outnumber the good. The emcees outnumber the thinkers by about fifty to one; the United Nations got only a grudging nod from the networks because it has nothing like the drawing power of Portia facing life.

This unbalance of radio programming and the increasing unchecked commercialism brought a flood of criticism down on the heads of the broadcasters last year. Cartoonists, columnists, editorial writers, feature writers, suddenly and simultaneously discovered that radio presented an almost too easy target for ridicule. Recently the listening public, a vast and amorphous crew of incredibly divergent tastes and interests, have joined in the fun. Complaints directly from listeners have risen sharply in volume since the war, and these the broadcasters cannot afford to ignore. In March of last year, the broadcasters got the severest jolt of all when the Federal Communications Commission in its famed "Blue Book" warned broadcasters to serve the public as well as the advertisers' interest or face revocation of their licenses.

This mounting chorus of criticism has put the broadcasters in a state of bewilderment. The industry has neither the precedent nor the quality of introspection necessary to clean its own house or even to determine where the place is dirty. Several broadcasters have charged that their detractors are an unholy alliance of left-wingers and advertising competitors, openly conspiring to destroy the com-

mercial basis of broadcasting and supplant it with government-operated radio. This quaint theory has taken such root that both NBC and CBS are currently engaged in a propaganda campaign aimed at establishing the superiority of commercial over government broadcasting. Even Don Quixote's windmills could hardly have been more astonished than radio's critics at this campaign.

Apart from a few extreme left-wingers, none of them has suggested that commercial broadcasting is wrong or evil in itself. The FCC, at which much of this campaign is directed, emphatically defended commercial broadcasting in its "Blue Book" and stated unequivocally that it had no desire to alter it beyond curbing some of its excesses.

In a mood of extreme self-righteousness, the broadcasters are bringing forth some interesting arguments in their own defense. They claim, among other things, that the character and quality of broadcasting are determined by the public and that the public doesn't want any changes made. To a limited extent this is true. Radio programs succeed or fail by their popularity or lack of it. In that respect radio is the most democratic of all entertainment media. The best paid and most respected comedians on the air are those who can summon the most listeners. But there are some serious flaws in the system.

During the last ten years, the criterion of pure popularity has resulted in a freezing of broadcast standards, a highly developed resistance to new ideas, a distaste amounting almost to revulsion against any form of experimentation, and a widespread and depressing imitateness. In its craze for listeners, radio has become the most incestuous of all arts. There is hardly a successful radio program which has not provoked a dozen scrofulous little imitations, designed to look as nearly like the original as the laws of plagiarism will allow. The parentage of virtually every program can be directly traced to the few original minds who entered broadcasting in its formative years.

There is nothing wrong with catering to the public, but pandering to its worst and most easily gratified instincts is something else again. Radio does a good deal of the latter. Besides, the broadcasters' contention that the public is satisfied with radio because it listens to it is seriously open to question. A listener may tune in Bob Hope or he may turn him off, but he can hardly be expected to improve on Hope's jokes. A radio program attracts listeners not because it is the best program that might conceivably be on the air, but because it is the best one that actually *is* on the air.

One of the most enlightening statements on the responsibility of broadcasters was made not long ago by Sir William Haley, director general of the British Broadcasting Corporation. "The secret of leadership in broadcasting," he said, "is that of always being ahead of the public, yet not so far

ahead as to be out of touch. A broadcast has no purpose if it is not listened to. Our task is to draw more and more listeners to all that is worth while."

This philosophy of leadership is seriously lacking in American broadcasting circles. A broadcaster would much rather imitate an old and proved idea than generate a new one. In only one field has radio successfully used its magnificent educational powers to lead the public to higher ground. That lone exception is the broadcasting of good music.

Although serious music was greeted at first with apathy and even outright hostility, the four networks have steadfastly put on the air the world's great operas and symphonies. Over a period of years, millions of persons who never heard good music before have been taught to appreciate and ultimately to crave it. The educational process has been heartbreakingly slow, but gradually the audience has expanded until today some twelve million persons listen to the Saturday broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera alone. It is impossible to overpraise or overestimate this single contribution of radio. The impact of good music on American culture is something that cannot be measured by ordinary means, but it's safe to assume that it has had a deep and permanent effect. America is a better place to live, and Americans are a more highly educated and more cultivated people, because of the presence on the air of good music.

This brilliant exception only draws attention to some of radio's glaring omissions. Radio could bring us the world's great books, great dramas, and great minds. Instead, we get jokes about Petrillo, two-way stretch, and the letters, endlessly repeated, LS MFT, possibly the most inane combination of noises ever inflicted on a helpless public.

But radio's immaturity is much less alarming than the fact that it doesn't seem to be getting anywhere. Far from improving, the general level of programming has deteriorated until today a great many persons in radio will privately admit that radio programs are more painful than at any other period in previous history. The best radio programs are the oldest radio programs.

There aren't very many different types of programs, and almost anyone with a radio set is familiar with all of them. In a recent nation-wide poll later summarized in book form under the title *The People Look at Radio*, programs were divided into the following classifications, listed in order of their popularity: news, radio plays, comedy, quiz, old familiar music, popular music, forums or discussions about public issues, classical music, sports events, audience-participation shows (not including quiz shows), religious broadcasts, serial dramas (more popularly known as soap opera), talks on farming, children's programs, homemaking programs, and livestock and grain reports.

Soap opera ranks twelfth in popularity, and audience-participation shows rank tenth, trailing well

behind such weighty audience-killers as classical music and forums. Yet soap opera and audience-participation shows monopolize virtually all daytime network broadcasting. Their only rivals are homemaking programs such as Mary Margaret McBride's. Apparently the women don't care much for the homemakers either, since they rank fifteenth. Clearly, the FCC knew what it was talking about when it charged that broadcasters were losing three quarters of their daytime audience because of the poor quality of the programs.

3

THE most popular and highly paid entertainers on the air today are the comedians such as Jack Benny, Fred Allen, and Edgar Bergen. With the exception of Allen and Bergen, both of whom have minds of their own, all these comedians rely heavily on a formula invented almost fifteen years ago by Jack Benny. It's a nice formula and, like Columbus's egg trick, easy to imitate after someone shows you how.

Benny has always surrounded himself with diverse characters, each with his own personality and comic possibilities. The personalities have varied somewhat in the last fourteen years but the formula never changes. In the center is Mr. Benny, at whom all the jokes are directed — jokes about his tightfisted attitude toward money, his waistline, his hairline, his violin playing, his age. Mr. Benny bellows with pain at each gag and the audience roars.

It sounds effortless but it isn't. Benny, a veteran of years of vaudeville, is a master of timing and inflection, possibly the greatest on the air. The characters who surround him have been selected and developed very shrewdly to exploit the Benny personality. Somehow Benny has contrived to teach each of them his own mastery of timing. In addition, Benny has whittled away at the classic formula of the joke until it has assumed an entirely new shape. A simple "hmm" takes the place of the punch line, which the home audience can fill in for itself. James Barrie once remarked that the most dramatic parts of his plays occurred when nothing at all was happening on the stage; similarly, the funniest parts of the Benny program occur when nobody is saying anything. The silence at these points is so pregnant with meaning that nothing needs to be said.

So deeply entrenched has the Benny formula become that the authors of *The People Look at Radio* remarked plaintively at one point: "Too many comedy programs follow the same pattern. The comedian, hero of the program, is the butt of all jokes either by self-derision or through his stooges. Is this a general function of humor or is it especially characteristic of the contemporaneous scene?"

The answer is "No" to both questions. The

Benny formula just happened to work and consequently has been perpetuated and will continue to be perpetuated. Years ago, comedians new at radio cut records of Benny's broadcasts and played them over and over again to find out what made him tick. They imitated his inflections, his minor characters, his pacing, and even his jokes. Today, where Benny has Rochester, Jack Carson till recently had Arthur Treacher, Bob Hope has Jerry Colonna, and Ed (Archie) Gardner has Eddie Green, each playing Sancho Panza to his master's Don Quixote.

One radio comedian who has never imitated Benny, though he is a staunch defender and close friend of Benny, is Fred Allen. Allen has been in radio as long as Benny and boasts that he has outlasted three presidents of NBC and will probably outlast the present one. One of the most original and truly inexhaustible wits in radio or anywhere else, Allen has successfully resisted all attempts to make him conform to anyone's formula except his own.

There have been two or three Allen formulas, each designed to give the maximum play to Allen's satiric mind. His various formats — Town Hall Tonight and the current Allen's Alley — give him an opportunity to comment acidly on the contemporary scene. Allen's material comes out of the daily newspapers (he's an omnivorous newspaper reader) or out of his experience, rarely out of a joke file. The sharp flavor of the Allen show is at least partly attributable also to his stubborn refusal to follow the crowd to Hollywood, where radio and the movies overshadow all else. Where Allen jokes about Gromyko or a best-selling novel or Senator Taft or a Midwest dust storm, the Hollywood comedians center their jokes on *Duel in the Sun* or Bing Crosby's ball team or Jane Russell's figure. Allen has a sense of proportion which no other top-ranking comedian shares, though a few of the new rising comedians are giving some indications of it.

Allen has not always been as popular as he is today. Although he has always had fans, he was never at the top of the Hooper rating until the beginning of the 1946-1947 season, his fifteenth in radio. Satire requires more understanding and intelligence from the audience than pratfalls. But, over the years, Allen has persistently brought his listeners to his level rather than descended to theirs. His integrity has paid him well. His audience is now not only one of the largest but easily the most loyal in radio.

In the field of satire, Allen has only one other serious competitor — that impudent little hedonist, Charlie McCarthy. Edgar Bergen, Charlie's brain and tongue, conceals under a mantle of shyness a keen wit and a thorough mastery of showmanship. Week after week, the Bergen-McCarthy team provides an entertaining half hour. In many ways, Bergen is pure radio entertainment. He is three

personalities all by himself. Yet so clearly has he defined the identities of McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd, as well as himself, that they have become live people in the minds of millions of radio fans. McCarthy, in fact, has become a live person even to Bergen. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bergen discuss Charlie's likes and dislikes, his weaknesses, and even his clothes, as if he were asleep in the next room.

Since the originals like Benny, Bergen, and Allen so far outstrip their competitors in popularity, why is it that a sponsor prefers an imitation Benny to a comedian with a new act? Possibly the best illustration is Henry Morgan. Morgan had his own fifteen-minute program for years on WJZ in New York, but not till September of 1946 did he get a full-scale, half-hour network program. The Morgan show was largely composed of a savage and hilarious lampooning of advertising copy, the movies, soap opera, and the more pompous aspects of American life. The young comedian was immediately hailed as the freshest new voice to be heard on the air in years. Yet, in spite of a highly favorable press and fountains of free publicity, Morgan's Hooper rating remained comparatively low, and he seems to be having sponsor trouble. Listeners have yet to become accustomed to the Morgan personality or the Morgan style of deadpan comedy. Some of his comedy is on such an elevated plane that listeners don't know what he's talking about.

Henry Morgan's plight is largely the plight of all radio. The broadcasters are now saddled with about a dozen top stars who command audiences of from fifteen to twenty million persons. Many of them are well along in years. Allen and Benny are fifty-three. Eddie Cantor and Charles Correll (the Andy of "Amos 'n' Andy") are fifty-five. James Jordan (Fibber McGee) is fifty-one. The similarity of their ages indicates that these comedians may all retire about the same time. There are few promising young stars to take their places and radio isn't training any. Radio has always been a talent borrower. Its greatest names came from vaudeville, but that reservoir has long since dried up. In a few years, radio may find itself at the end of a blind alley.

Radio comedians are different from any other comedians in one important respect. In the theater or in the movies, comedy is the result of teamwork between an actor, a writer, and a director. The actor provides the personality, the writer gives him the jokes, and the director puts the whole thing together. The comedian is not expected to have any creative or critical brains.

This separation of function is missing in radio. While all comedians have writers, they are their own judges of the material the writers give them, and the level of humor in the program is an almost automatic reflection of the level of the critical judgment of the comedian. In the case of Benny,

Allen, and Bergen, it's high. In the case of Bob Hope, Red Skelton, Eddie Cantor, and Abbott and Costello, it's low — sometimes painfully so.

4

RADIO drama, which is second in popularity with listeners, ranges in quality from the superb "Theatre Guild on the Air" to murder drama. Easily topping the list, the "Theatre Guild on the Air" presents brilliantly cast, full-hour adaptations of stage plays. They can hardly be improved on. The only weakness in the Theatre Guild program is a shortage of material. There just aren't enough stage hits to go around, and sometimes the Guild is forced to broadcast some rather crummy plays. In one thirty-nine weeks' season, the Guild could run through more good plays than it has presented on Broadway in the last twenty-five years.

Virtually all other radio drama can be divided into a few standard categories, each with its own fixed and unchanging formula. Once the formula is established, the product becomes as uniform as a Ford car. The various categories may be classified as murder drama, connubial comedy (Fibber McGee and Molly, Ozzie and Harriet, Blondie, Ethel and Albert, the Phil Harrises), the juvenile or "Coming, Mother!" comedy, the regional (Brooklyn or Pleasantville) comedy, the bobby sox or "divinely, utterly" comedy, the lovable old rascal (Great Gildersleeve, Frank Morgan) comedy, and the nice young man or "Gee whiz!" school of comedy (Dennis Day, Kenny Baker, Alan Young, Eddie Bracken).

Most of them may be described as character comedy, which is more adaptable to radio than any other kind of comedy. In no other field in radio is there so much outright stealing of other people's ideas. Once a character is established as a laugh provoker, a dozen imitators will bob up on the other networks under different names. The most extreme example of this standardization of personality is Dennis Day. Mr. Day's personality ("Gee whiz, he stole my yoyo.") was invented and perfected by Jack Benny. Many years ago, Mr. Benny affixed these dewy and lovable characteristics to a young tenor named Kenny Baker. Later Mr. Baker left the Benny show and was given his own program, "The Kenny Baker Show," on which he played the part of a wide-eyed male innocent five times a week. Benny hired Day, taught him the same tricks and the same way of saying "Yes, Mr. Benny." Day now has his own program where he is young, eager, stupid, and excessively lovable. A couple of other sponsors employed Eddie Bracken of the movies and Alan Young, a talented newcomer, to work the same side of the street. All four of them sound so much alike they could change places without anyone outside the studio knowing the difference.

Each has a girl friend, generally named Barbara, who loves him through thick and thin though he is usually slow in recognizing it. They all have close friends who exploit them and try to abscond with either their money or their girl or both. They live in small towns named Weaverville or Pleasantville or Shadyville and they jerk sodas in the drugstore. Dennis — or Alan or whoever — gets the rat poison mixed up with old Mrs. Anderson's cough medicine and there is hell to pay. The people who dream all this up all live in Hollywood, which is one reason everything in Weaverville sounds so remote from the main stream of American life.

The most widely imitated small-town program is "Fibber McGee and Molly." It originated a character named Mr. Wimple, a druggist who sounds just like Calvin Coolidge. There is now a Mr. Wimple on "Great Gildersleeve," where he is known as Mr. Peavey; another one called Mr. Willoughby on the Day program; and half a dozen other druggists on other programs. It has become as difficult to write a comedy program without a New England druggist as it once was to write an English drawing-room comedy without a duke. Since the United States is an immense and untapped reservoir of personality, it's difficult to see why radio writers persist in imitating the characters on other radio programs rather than the originals that can be seen anywhere on the street.

One of the most popular types of radio drama, and one which is drawing increasing blasts of alarm from sociologists, is the murder mystery. Sponsors like such dramas because they are the least expensive of evening programs. They don't require name stars, who automatically run costs sky-high, or even high-priced writers. Yet they're enormously popular with listeners. Two of them, "Suspense" and "Mr. District Attorney," boast Hoopers in the first fifteen.

While they aren't literary masterpieces, the whodunits are reasonably intelligent. The dialogue in the better ones is literate and the plots are ingenious. Like the movie writers, radio writers do mystery stories just a little better than anything else, possibly because they are long on technical excellence and short on creative ability.

Actually, there is almost more variety among the whodunits than among all the other forms of radio drama put together. "Mr. and Mrs. North" usually get mixed up in jolly little murders in which everyone has a wonderful time except the corpse. The naturalist school of murder is presided over by Sam Spade, Nick Charles, and the Fat Man. In these, everyone is studiously indifferent to bloodshed, and the private dick is a very tough cookie indeed, who can break a man's wrist without a quiver of distaste. He also likes blondes and may have a different one in each episode. There are half a dozen of them on the air now, all alike as two paper clips, and the public can't seem to get enough.

Only occasionally does radio rise above its tested formulas. Last year at least one sponsor, Lever Brothers, a soap company, experimented briefly and courageously with a dramatic series called "Fighting Senator." The Senator was a young, recently discharged Army officer who tried to reform Congress all by himself. He sounded like Jimmy Stewart, and his adventures had a celluloid smell about them. Nevertheless, the series grappled with problems right out of the day's headlines, which was a refreshing change in radio drama. Another notable series is "New World A-Coming" presented by WMCA in New York. One of the dramas in this series was a vivid biographical sketch of Senator Theodore G. Bilbo, which left the gentleman from Mississippi with hardly a veil to cover his naked past. Those are the exceptions, however.

5

THE typical radio drama has been borrowed from the movies, the theater, or a popular novel, has been on the air for years, and has been worn threadbare by repetition. Possibly the most typical example is Henry Aldrich. Henry Aldrich first came to public attention in 1938 in a very funny play called "What a Life." After making his bow in the movies, Henry landed in radio, where he has operated very successfully ever since and will probably remain until Doomsday. Ezra Stone, who originated the part on Broadway, is still playing Henry on the radio. He's thirty years old and has a wife and two children and, except for a spell in the Army, has been yelling "Coming, Mother!" for nine years. In the theater or even in the movies bright new ideas come along to push out the bright old ideas, but nothing ever changes in radio as long as it draws an audience.

Radio presents its sorriest spectacle in the daytime. The listener has his choice of soap opera, give-away shows, or quizzes, which means he may listen to the heart-rending sobs of Helen Trent or squeals of rapture from the studio audience. NBC has four straight hours of soap opera and CBS two and a half, a form of torture known as block listening. People who like soap operas like a lot of them. By lining them up on two networks instead of spreading them around all four, the soap people have fixed things so that, without turning the dial, the fans may listen successively to the misadventures of Stella Dallas, Lorenzo Jones, Young Widder Brown, and Portia facing life.

The People Look at Radio revealed that 50 per cent of American women are soap opera fans and the other 50 per cent are so violently opposed they keep their radios turned off in soap opera hours. While this indicates the networks are turning their backs on about 50 per cent of their audience, neither network plans to do anything about it. Taken as a lump, the soaps represent a far larger slice of in-

come than any number of Jack Bennys. The torrent of criticism directed against the soaps resulted only in a number of conferences between the networks and the sponsors. Nothing ever came of them because no one could think of a substitute for soap opera that would be as cheap or would sell as much soap. Even if the conferences had produced any bright ideas, it's doubtful whether the soap companies would have the courage to try them. The dominating philosophy in radio is to let well enough alone.

Yet soap opera is no joking matter. Many a psychiatrist has traced his patient's neurosis back to a love of soap opera. An even worse result is the day-by-day debasing of the cultural tastes of a large proportion of the nation's housewives. Naturally, the broadcasters continue to defend them. Niles Trammell once stated in a speech that soap opera gave the housewife courage to face her own daily problems. It's a fantastic argument. The ordinary problems of soap opera heroines are murder, suicide, illegitimacy, and bankruptcy, none of which a housewife is likely to run up against in a lifetime.

The broadcasters are also inclined to murmur apologetically that, after all, radio is a mass medium and you can't expect the tastes of the masses to be on too high a level. One broadcaster even held up the popularity of comic books as a parallel, feeling no apparent incongruity at putting his \$400,000,000 a year industry on a cultural level with comic books. The argument that radio has too large an audience to aim higher than the knees is a dubious one at best.

No social history of the forties would be complete without a mention of give-away radio programs which may well rank with dance marathons, gangster funerals, and midget golf as one of the dizzier phenomena of our age. Everything from four-motor bombers to streetcars has been given away on them, and the masters of ceremonies will rack their brains for bigger gifts and wackier stunts.

One of the easiest ways to pick up a load of loot on these shows is to be engaged or married. On "Married for Life" a newly engaged couple was given cutlery, watches, radios, the wedding dress, the wedding ring, and the honeymoon in exchange for telling the audience just how thorny was the path of true love. Young couples are actually married during the broadcast of "Bride and Groom," though the microphone is mercifully absent from the actual ceremony.

On the rowdier give-away shows the emphasis is on the stunt rather than the gifts. Husbands paste one another with lemon meringue pies, and housewives race each other around the stage on a confection called "Ladies Be Seated." On a show called "Take It from There," audience participants drenched each other with seltzer water if the emcee demanded it. Why this should appeal to a

radio audience which can't see any of it is one of the inscrutable mysteries of popular taste.

Slap-happiest of all give-away shows is Ralph Edwards's "Truth or Consequences." As a gag for Mr. Edwards, a veteran lived for three weeks on a traffic-intersection safety island to win \$1500. Later, the same man carried a pie tin of Atlantic Ocean water across the country in a taxicab to win another \$500. Art Linkletter, another of the more imaginative masters of ceremonies, sent a young married couple into the Oregon woods in a covered wagon to search for \$1000.

The last successful new idea to invade radio, it is frequently said, was "Information Please." One of the first of the quiz shows, it is still the best of them. The questions on "Information Please" are thought-provoking, the conversation is literate, and the answers are usually educational. But, all in all, "Information Please" has done more harm than good. Since its arrival ten years ago, the air has resounded with questions, many of which would insult the intelligence of a ten-year-old schoolboy. A housewife can win an award now by remembering her own name. If she can't remember it, there is usually a consolation prize.

Here are a few samples of the questions actually asked on quiz shows: In what profession does a man wear rubber gloves? That's from a quiz show called "Detect and Collect" and, believe it or not, the woman got it wrong. Is a diphthong an element of nature, ashes from the grate, or the sound of combined vowels? That's from "Quiz of Two Cities" and the lady got it wrong. Was Washington born in Massachusetts or Virginia? The man got it right ("Give and Take"). What is aqua pura another name for? With a little coaching from the audience the girl got it right ("Dr. I.Q.").

6

ALL in all, radio presents a dreary picture but not necessarily a hopeless one. Broadcasting is only twenty-seven years old. The stale formulas of its dramas are no more rigid than the formulas used in most popular magazines up until a few years ago. In fact, radio uses the same ones. The broadcasters are frightened by new ideas, but so was Hollywood for its first twenty-six years (in many respects, it still is).

Also, to give the broadcasters their due, they have a problem which neither Hollywood nor magazines nor newspapers nor anything else ever had. Broadcasting stations operate from eighteen to twenty-four hours a day. One half-hour comedy script runs to about thirty double-spaced pages, which is a fearful amount of white space to fill intelligently once a week and an intolerable amount to fill once a day. John F. Royal, NBC vice-president in charge

of television, and one of the few real showmen in radio, thinks there aren't enough creative brains in the country to provide topflight entertainment to the nation's 1025 radio stations sixteen hours a day. Even if there were, radio couldn't afford them.

Despite any impressions to the contrary, radio has attracted some extraordinarily creative, intelligent, and energetic young men who struggle valiantly against almost hopeless odds to make radio realize its own potentialities. Davidson Taylor, executive vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Robert Shayon, also of CBS, have produced some notable documentaries in the last year, the groundwork for which was laid in the experimental Columbia Workshop. Ed Murrow, recently resigned executive vice-president of CBS, introduced "CBS Views the Press," a lively, critical analysis of New York journalism. The aggressive spirit of this program is an important milestone in radio.

Bob Saudek, director of public service broadcasts for the American Broadcasting Company, is another sincere, able, and imaginative craftsman who has succeeded more than once in combining high purpose with excellent showmanship. Saudek recently summed up radio's chief defect in one succinct sentence: "There should be only one prize in radio — and it should be given for courage."

Perhaps the most heartening sign of all is the fact that some of radio's severest critics are in radio, not outside it. The violence of their dissatisfaction cannot help doing some good.

But before much progress can be made, the broadcasters will have to loosen the grips the advertisers now hold on programs and exercise some editorial supervision over the shows they broadcast. It won't be easy. Ten years ago, CBS laid down a code of standards governing children's programs, designed to meet the complaints of mothers and parent-teacher societies. Within a year, CBS had lost all its sponsored children's programs and it hasn't got any of them back yet. The advertisers brook no interference in their control of programming.

Before the broadcasters get around to solving any of their problems, the problems themselves may be academic. Television took giant technical strides during the war. The manufacturers expect to produce 100,000 television sets this year and a million next year. After that, they will spill out like radios. "My future is entirely wrapped up in sound broadcasting," Niles Trammell said not long ago, "but I'm the first to admit that when television comes in, sound broadcasting is finished."

Whether television will repeat all the errors made by the sound broadcasters is a question which, from this distance, no one can possibly answer.



An American essayist whose humor and penetration have informed the editorials of the New Yorker, E. B. WHITE occasionally explores country themes and writes about his farm in Maine. His friend James Thurber once described him as a man who lives "half-hidden from the eye," but in his writing he usually stands revealed, and not much remains hidden from anybody's eye. We who have read One Man's Meat and The Wild Flag are the wiser for that philosophy which Mr. White applies to private life and public responsibility.

DEATH OF A PIG

by E. B. WHITE

1

I SPENT several days and nights in mid-September with an ailing pig and I feel driven to account for this stretch of time, more particularly since the pig died at last, and I lived, and things might easily have gone the other way round and none left to do the accounting. Even now, so close to the event, I cannot recall the hours sharply and am not ready to say whether death came on the third night or the fourth night. This uncertainty afflicts me with a sense of personal deterioration; if I were in decent health I would know how many nights I had sat up with a pig.

The scheme of buying a spring pig in blossom-time, feeding it through summer and fall, and butchering it when the solid cold weather arrives, is a familiar scheme to me and follows an antique pattern. It is a tragedy enacted on most farms with perfect fidelity to the original script. The murder, being premeditated, is in the first degree but is quick and skillful, and the smoked bacon and ham provide a ceremonial ending whose fitness is seldom questioned.

Once in a while something slips — one of the actors goes up in his lines and the whole performance stumbles and halts. My pig simply failed to show up for a meal. The alarm spread rapidly. The classic outline of the tragedy was lost. I found myself cast suddenly in the role of pig's friend and physician—a farcical character with an enema bag for a prop. I had a presentiment, the very first afternoon, that the play would never regain its balance and that my sympathies were now wholly with the pig. This was slapstick — the sort of dramatic treatment which instantly appealed to my old dachshund, Fred, who joined the vigil, held the bag, and, when all was over, presided at the interment. When we slid the body into the grave, we both were shaken to the core. The loss we felt was not the loss of ham but the

loss of pig. He had evidently become precious to me, not that he represented a distant nourishment in a hungry time, but that he had suffered in a suffering world. But I'm running ahead of my story and shall have to go back.

My pigpen is at the bottom of an old orchard below the house. The pigs I have raised have lived in a faded building which once was an ice-house. There is a pleasant yard to move about in, shaded by an apple tree which overhangs the low rail fence. A pig couldn't ask for anything better — or none has, at any rate. The sawdust in the icehouse makes a comfortable bottom in which to root, and a warm bed. This sawdust, however, came under suspicion when the pig took sick. One of my neighbors said he thought the pig would have done better on new ground — the same principle that applies in planting potatoes. He said there might be something unhealthy about that sawdust, that he never thought well of sawdust.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when I first noticed that there was something wrong with the pig. He failed to appear at the trough for his supper, and when a pig (or a child) refuses supper a chill wave of fear runs through any household, or icehousehold. After examining my pig, who was stretched out in the sawdust inside the building, I went to the phone and cranked it four times. Mr. Henderson answered. "What's good for a sick pig?" I asked. (There is never any identification needed on a country phone; the person on the other end knows who is talking by the sound of the voice and by the character of the question.)

"I don't know, I never had a sick pig," said Mr. Henderson, "but I can find out quick enough. You hang up and I'll call Irving."

Mr. Henderson was back on the line again in

five minutes. "Irving says roll him over on his back and give him two ounces of castor oil or sweet oil, and if that doesn't do the trick give him an injection of soapy water. He says he's almost sure the pig's plugged up, and even if he's wrong, it can't do any harm."

I thanked Mr. Henderson. I didn't go right down to the pig, though. I sank into a chair and sat still for a few minutes to think about my troubles, and then I got up and went to the barn, catching up on some odds and ends that needed tending to. Unconsciously I held off, for an hour, the deed by which I would officially recognize the collapse of the performance of raising a pig; I wanted no interruption in the regularity of feeding, the steadiness of growth, the even succession of days. I wanted no interruption, wanted no oil, no deviation. I just wanted to keep on raising a pig, full meal after full meal, spring into summer into fall. I didn't even know whether there were two ounces of castor oil on the place.

2

SHORTLY after five o'clock I remembered that we had been invited out to dinner that night and realized that if I were to dose a pig there was no time to lose. The dinner date seemed a familiar conflict: I move in a desultory society and often a week or two will roll by without my going to anybody's house to dinner or anyone's coming to mine, but when an occasion does arise, and I am summoned, something usually turns up (an hour or two in advance) to make all human intercourse seem vastly inappropriate. I have come to believe that there is in hostesses a special power of divination, and that they deliberately arrange dinners to coincide with pig failure or some other sort of failure. At any rate, it was after five o'clock and I knew I could put off no longer the evil hour.

When my son and I arrived at the pigyard, armed with a small bottle of castor oil and a length of clothesline, the pig had emerged from his house and was standing in the middle of his yard, listlessly. He gave us a slim greeting. I could see that he felt uncomfortable and uncertain. I had brought the clothesline thinking I'd have to tie him (the pig weighed more than a hundred pounds) but we never used it. My son reached down, grabbed both front legs, upset him quickly, and when he opened his mouth to scream I turned the oil into his throat—a pink, corrugated area I had never seen before. I had just time to read the label while the neck of the bottle was in his mouth. It said Puretest. The screams, slightly muffled by oil, were pitched in the hysterically high range of pigg sound, as though torture were being carried out, but they didn't last long: it was all over rather suddenly, and, his legs released, the pig righted himself.

In the upset position the corners of his mouth had been turned down, giving him a frowning expression. Back on his feet again, he regained the set smile that a pig wears even in sickness. He stood his ground, sucking slightly at the residue of oil; a few drops leaked out of his lips while his wicked eyes, shaded by their coy little lashes, turned on me in disgust and hatred. I scratched him gently with oily fingers and he remained quiet, as though trying to recall the satisfaction of being scratched when in health, and seeming to rehearse in his mind the indignity to which he had just been subjected. I noticed, as I stood there, four or five small dark spots on his back near the tail end, reddish brown in color, each about the size of a housefly. I could not make out what they were. They did not look troublesome but at the same time they did not look like mere surface bruises or chafe marks. Rather they seemed blemishes of internal origin. His stiff white bristles almost completely hid them and I had to part the bristles with my fingers to get a good look.

Several hours later, a few minutes before midnight, having dined well and at someone else's expense, I returned to the pighouse with a flashlight. The patient was asleep. Kneeling, I felt his ears (as you might put your hand on the forehead of a child) and they seemed cool, and then with the light made a careful examination of the yard and the house for sign that the oil had worked. I found none and went to bed.

We had been having an unseasonable spell of weather—hot, close days, with the fog shutting in every night, scaling for a few hours in midday, then creeping back again at dark, drifting in first over the trees on the point, then suddenly blowing across the fields, blotting out the world and taking possession of houses, men, and animals. Everyone kept hoping for a break, but the break failed to come. Next day was another hot one. I visited the pig before breakfast and tried to tempt him with a little milk in his trough. He just stared at it, while I made a sucking sound through my teeth to remind him of past pleasures of the feast. With very small, timid pigs, weanlings, this ruse is often quite successful and will encourage them to eat; but with a large, sick pig the ruse is senseless and the sound I made must have made him feel, if anything, more miserable. He not only did not crave food, he felt a positive revulsion to it. I found a place under the apple tree where he had vomited in the night.

At this point, although a depression had settled over me, I didn't suppose that I was going to lose my pig. From the lustiness of a healthy pig a man derives a feeling of personal lustiness; the stuff that goes into the trough and is received with such enthusiasm is an earnest of some later feast of his own, and when this suddenly comes to an end and the food lies stale and untouched, souring in

the sun, the pig's imbalance becomes the man's, vicariously, and life seems insecure, displaced, transitory.

3

As my own spirits declined, along with the pig's, the spirits of my vile old dachshund rose. The frequency of our trips down the footpath through the orchard to the pigyard delighted him, although he suffers greatly from arthritis, moves with difficulty, and would be bedridden if he could find anyone willing to serve him meals on a tray.

He never missed a chance to visit the pig with me, and he made many professional calls on his own. You could see him down there at all hours, his white face parting the grass along the fence as he wobbled and stumbled about, his stethoscope dangling — a happy quack, writing his villainous prescriptions and grinning his corrosive grin. When the enema bag appeared, and the bucket of warm suds, his happiness was complete, and he managed to squeeze his enormous body between the two lowest rails of the yard and then assumed full charge of the irrigation. Once, when I lowered the bag to check the flow, he reached in and hurriedly drank a few mouthfuls of the suds to test their potency. I have noticed that Fred will feverishly consume any substance that is associated with trouble — the bitter flavor is to his liking. When the bag was above reach, he concentrated on the pig and was everywhere at once, a tower of strength and inconvenience. The pig, curiously enough, stood rather quietly through this colonic carnival, and the enema, though ineffective, was not as difficult as I had anticipated.

I discovered, though, that once having given a pig an enema there is no turning back, no chance of resuming one of life's more stereotyped roles. The pig's lot and mine were inextricably bound now, as though the rubber tube were the silver cord. From then until the time of his death I held the pig steadily in the bowl of my mind; the task of trying to deliver him from his misery became a strong obsession. His suffering soon became the embodiment of all earthly wretchedness. Along toward the end of the afternoon, defeated in physicking, I phoned the veterinary twenty miles away and placed the case formally in his hands. He was full of questions, and when I casually mentioned the dark spots on the pig's back, his voice changed its tone.

"I don't want to scare you," he said, "but when there are spots, erysipelas has to be considered."

Together we considered erysipelas, with frequent interruptions from the telephone operator, who wasn't sure the connection had been established.

"If a pig has erysipelas can he give it to a person?" I asked.

"Yes, he can," replied the vet.

"Have they answered?" asked the operator.

"Yes, they have," I said. Then I addressed the vet again. "You better come over here and examine this pig right away."

"I can't come myself," said the vet, "but McDonald can come this evening if that's all right. Mac knows more about pigs than I do anyway. You needn't worry too much about the spots. To indicate erysipelas they would have to be deep hemorrhagic infarcts."

"Deep hemorrhagic what?" I asked.

"Infarcts," said the vet.

"Have they answered?" asked the operator.

"Well," I said, "I don't know what you'd call these spots, except they're about the size of a housefly. If the pig has erysipelas I guess I have it, too, by this time, because we've been very close lately."

"McDonald will be over," said the vet.

I hung up. My throat felt dry and I went to the cupboard and got a bottle of whiskey. Deep hemorrhagic infarcts — the phrase began fastening its hooks in my head. I had assumed that there could be nothing much wrong with a pig during the months it was being groomed for murder; my confidence in the essential health and endurance of pigs had been strong and deep, particularly in the health of pigs that belonged to me and that were part of my proud scheme. The awakening had been violent and I minded it all the more because I knew that what could be true of my pig could be true also of the rest of my tidy world. I tried to put this distasteful idea from me, but it kept recurring. I took a short drink of the whiskey and then, although I wanted to go down to the yard and look for fresh signs, I was scared to. I was certain I had erysipelas.

It was long after dark and the supper dishes had been put away when a car drove in and McDonald got out. He had a girl with him. I could just make her out in the darkness — she seemed young and pretty. "This is Miss Wyman," he said. "We've been having a picnic supper on the shore, that's why I'm late."

McDonald stood in the driveway and stripped off his jacket, then his shirt. His stocky arms and capable hands showed up in my flashlight's gleam as I helped him find his coverall and get zipped up. The rear seat of his car contained an astonishing amount of paraphernalia, which he soon overhauled, selecting a chain, a syringe, a bottle of oil, a rubber tube, and some other things I couldn't identify. Miss Wyman said she'd go along with us and see the pig. I led the way down the warm slope of the orchard, my light picking out the path for them, and we all three climbed the fence, entered the pighouse, and squatted by the pig while McDonald took a rectal reading. My flashlight picked up the glitter of an engagement ring on the girl's hand.

"No elevation," said McDonald, twisting the thermometer in the light. "You needn't worry about erysipelas." He ran his hand slowly over the pig's stomach and at one point the pig cried out in pain.

"Poor piggedly-wiggledy!" said Miss Wyman.

The treatment I had been giving the pig for two days was then repeated, somewhat more expertly, by the doctor, Miss Wyman and I handing him things as he needed them — holding the chain that he had looped around the pig's upper jaw, holding the syringe, holding the bottle stopper, the end of the tube, all of us working in darkness and in comfort, working with the instinctive teamwork induced by emergency conditions, the pig unprotesting, the house shadowy, protecting, intimate. I went to bed tired but with a feeling of relief that I had turned over part of the responsibility of the case to a licensed doctor. I was beginning to think, though, that the pig was not going to live.

4

HE DIED twenty-four hours later, or it might have been forty-eight — there is a blur in time here, and I may have lost or picked up a day in the telling and the pig one in the dying. At intervals during the last day I took cool fresh water down to him and at such times as he found the strength to get to his feet he would stand with head in the pail and snuffle his snout around. He drank a few sips but no more; yet it seemed to comfort him to dip his nose in water and bobble it about, sucking in and blowing out through his teeth. Much of the time, now, he lay indoors half buried in sawdust. Once, near the last, while I was attending him I saw him try to make a bed for himself but he lacked the strength, and when he set his snout into the dust he was unable to plow even the little furrow he needed to lie down in.

He came out of the house to die. When I went down, before going to bed, he lay stretched in the yard a few feet from the door. I knelt, saw that he was dead, and left him there: his face had a mild look, expressive neither of deep peace nor of deep suffering, although I think he had suffered a good deal. I went back up to the house and to bed, and cried internally — deep hemorrhagic intears. I didn't wake till nearly eight the next morning, and when I looked out the open window the grave was already being dug, down beyond the dump under a wild apple. I could hear the spade strike against the small rocks that blocked the way. Never send to know for whom the grave is dug, I said to myself, it's dug for thee. Fred, I well knew, was supervising the work of digging, so I ate breakfast slowly.

It was a Saturday morning. The thicket in which I found the gravediggers at work was dark and warm, the sky overcast. Here, among alders and young hackmatacks, at the foot of the apple tree,

Howard had dug a beautiful hole, five feet long, three feet wide, three feet deep. He was standing in it, removing the last spadefuls of earth while Fred patrolled the brink in simple but impressive circles, disturbing the loose earth of the mound so that it trickled back in. There had been no rain in weeks and the soil, even three feet down, was dry and powdery. As I stood and stared, an enormous earthworm which had been partially exposed by the spade at the bottom dug itself deeper and made a slow withdrawal, seeking even remoter moistures at even lonelier depths. And just as Howard stepped out and rested his spade against the tree and lit a cigarette, a small green apple separated itself from a branch overhead and fell into the hole. Everything about this last scene seemed overwritten — the dismal sky, the shabby woods, the imminence of rain, the worm (legendary bedfellow of the dead), the apple (conventional garnish of a pig).

But even so, there was a directness and dispatch about animal burial, I thought, that made it a more decent affair than human burial: there was no stop-over in the undertaker's foul parlor, no wreath nor spray; and when we hitched a line to the pig's hind legs and dragged him swiftly from his yard, throwing our weight into the harness and leaving a wake of crushed grass and smoothed rubble over the dump, ours was a businesslike procession, with Fred, the dishonorable pallbearer, staggering along in the rear, his perverse bereavement showing in every seam in his face; and the post mortem performed handily and swiftly right at the edge of the grave, so that the inwards which had caused the pig's death preceded him into the ground and he lay at last resting squarely on the cause of his own undoing.

I threw in the first shovelful, and then we worked rapidly and without talk, until the job was complete. I picked up the rope, made it fast to Fred's collar (he is a notorious ghoul), and we all three filed back up the path to the house, Fred bringing up the rear and holding back every inch of the way, feigning unusual stiffness. I noticed that although he weighed far less than the pig, he was harder to drag, being possessed of the vital spark.

The news of the death of my pig traveled fast and far, and I received many expressions of sympathy from friends and neighbors, for no one took the event lightly and the premature expiration of a pig is, I soon discovered, a departure which the community marks solemnly on its calendar, a sorrow in which it feels fully involved. I have written this account in penitence and in grief, as a man who failed to raise his pig, and to explain my deviation from the classic course of so many raised pigs. The grave in the woods is unmarked, but Fred can direct the mourner to it unerringly and with immense good will, and I know he and I shall often revisit it, singly and together, in seasons of reflection and despair, on flagless memorial days of our own choosing.



The Atlantic Serial



A native of Newburyport and a graduate of Harvard, JOHN MARQUAND began writing fiction in 1921. The Late George Apley won the Pulitzer Prize for 1938, and the four novels which followed established Mr. Marquand as a painter of the contemporary scene, a novelist keen, mature, and always entertaining. Now the Atlantic presents a major theme culled from the first half of his new book. The scene is laid in the Stuyvesant Bank of New York, where two junior executives, Charles Gray, back from the war, and Roger Blakesley, are being sized up for a vice-presidency which has fallen vacant. Tony Burton, the bank's president, will have to make the choice. Meantime we see Charles as he deals with clients and associates. The reader should remember that this is the first draft of Mr. Marquand's work and that the wording may be changed slightly in the final version.

"BANKING IS AN ART"

by JOHN P. MARQUAND

16

CHARLES was always very conscious of the fact that he belonged in a different world whenever he entered the Whitakers' apartment. When he handed the butler his hat and coat, he knew that he understood the whole place very well, academically but not practically. It was an environment in which he would move gracefully, without tipping things over, but one in which he would never live.

The hall was filled with all sorts of objects that he knew had come from the house on Fifth Avenue belonging to Mrs. Whitaker's father, that canny Yankee from Maine. Above the small refectory table that held a silver tray for visiting cards was a portrait of Mrs. Whitaker's father, still dominating those possessions. He had a lantern-jawed, wary look, and a sort of assurance that belonged to another generation. If the old man had been alive, Charles thought, he would never have needed the services of the Trust Department of the Stuyvesant.

It was obviously going to be another family conference because the room at the end of the hall was set for it, a large room that looked small because of the piano and the Bouguereaus and Schreyers on the wall, the Italian chairs, the overstuffed sofas, and all the gold-framed pictures on the tables. They must have been waiting for him, although a glance at his wrist watch showed him that he was

there right on the dot. Mrs. Whitaker, in a dark tailored suit, was seated on a sofa in front of the fireplace, amazingly upright in spite of its yielding upholstery. She was holding a tablet on her knee with questions written on it. She always wrote down questions. Mr. Whitaker was standing near the fireplace in a suit that was too tight for him. He looked round and red and uncomfortable as he always did at those conferences. Albert, who had risen when Charles came in, looked more like his mother than his father. You could see that he had kept his figure by conscientious outdoor exercise, and he had kept his hair, too, though it was growing gray at the temples.

Albert's wife as usual looked very bored. Though she and Charles had never exchanged more than a word of greeting, it always surprised him how clearly she could make her feelings plain by saying nothing, not even by fidgeting or frowning. She was always able to tell him what she was thinking, not that she cared whether he knew or not. She was telling him simply by sitting on the edge of one of the Italian chairs, that she was bored by having to be there, that she was too young, too pretty, too blond, to be there, that she hated the stuffy furniture and her family-in-law, and that she was bored by Albert, too. She was telling him that she wanted to get away somewhere and have a Martini, that

she wanted to play a rubber of bridge or something, that it was only necessity that brought her around to that place, and that he mustn't think that she liked it, or that she liked him either. She knew just what he was, a tiresome man from the bank, called for one of those damned family conferences that Mother Whitaker was always having. She knew just where he belonged and there was no need for any introductions.

"I hope I'm not late," Charles said.

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Whitaker. "I know we can count on your never being late. Sit down here beside me, Mr. Gray, so we can read things together."

Charles sank down beside her on the sofa. He wished he could sit as straight as Mrs. Whitaker.

"Albert," Mrs. Whitaker said, "get Mr. Gray a little table."

"Oh, I don't need a table," Charles said. "There won't be anything to sign."

"You'll need it to put things on," Mrs. Whitaker said, "the things out of your brief case. It's always so reassuring to see you with a brief case. I can't imagine how you'd look without it."

"That's true," Charles said. "I don't believe you've ever seen me without it."

"You'd look, well, almost naked without it," Mrs. Whitaker said. "I remember what Father always used to say."

"What did he used to say?" Albert asked.

"You were too young to remember him well, dear," Mrs. Whitaker said. "I wish you could have seen him, Mr. Gray. Hubert, doesn't Mr. Gray remind you of Father?"

"Well, not altogether, Ellie," Mr. Whitaker said.

"I don't mean altogether, Hubert. I mean partly. He has the same expression sometimes, when we're getting down to brass tacks as Father used to say. Father always used to say when you do business with someone be sure he does business."

"I understand what he meant," Charles said. "Shall we get down to brass tacks?" and he reached for the catch of his brief case.

"Hubert."

"Yes, Ellie," Mr. Whitaker said.

"Perhaps Mr. Gray would like a Scotch and soda."

"Oh, no thank you," Charles said.

"Well, I'd like one," Albert said. "Come on, Dad. How about it, Dorothy?"

"Well," Dorothy said, and her voice was coldly sweet, "I might have one if Mother Whitaker doesn't mind."

"Of course I don't mind, darling," Mrs. Whitaker said. "Why on earth should I mind? Mr. Gray and I will have some tea when everything is over. Won't we, Mr. Gray?"

"Why yes," Charles said. "That would be very nice." He saw Dorothy glance at him. She was telling him as plainly as though she had spoken, for God's sakes to get on with it, and he hoped that he

was telling her when he glanced back at her, that for God's sakes he wanted to get on with it, that he didn't like sitting there any more than she did, that he was only present as she was because he had to be.

"Now," said Mrs. Whitaker, "let's begin at the beginning. Let's begin by having you scold us, Mr. Gray, because we all need a good scolding."

"About what, Mrs. Whitaker?" Charles asked.

"About the ranch," Mrs. Whitaker said. "I know how it must seem with the world the way it is, but it's really for Albert's sinus. Albert and Dorothy are just back from Arizona. You can tell it by looking at them, can't you?"

Charles looked up at Dorothy and their glances met again.

"Albert," Dorothy said sweetly, "why don't you show him the photographs? That's what you brought them for, wasn't it?"

"Oh yes," Albert said. "If you're out there, you might as well have some sort of a place and not stay at a hotel. We saw this one fifty miles out of Tucson. These are just snapshots but they'll give you an idea, and Dorothy's crazy about it. She needs some sort of place."

Curiously enough there was actually a feeling of uncertainty as Albert handed him the photographs. He could feel that uncertainty as he looked at them. For some reason that was beyond him he knew that they were anxious for his approval and it was true that the snapshots gave an idea. They were mountain and desert views with low buildings of the Spanish hacienda type, corrals, patios, galleries, a swimming pool. It was something which he had never touched upon, something they must have known was entirely beyond him, but still they wanted him to approve.

"If you really want it," Charles said gently, "I don't know why you shouldn't have it. Is a hundred thousand the asking price? If you really want it, you'd better give me the agent's name."

"He does really want it," Mrs. Whitaker said. "If you could call up the agent it would be sweet of you, Mr. Gray. It would sound better than having Albert do it."

"Of course," Charles said, "you'll have to use a little capital, but I don't see why you shouldn't."

He was opening the brief case, taking out the folders and spreading them on the table. There was no earthly reason why they shouldn't. It hardly mattered as much to them as a new overcoat would have mattered to him. This was not the conventional way to look at it; he wondered what they would have thought if he had presented the matter to them in that light.

"That's all that bothers me," Mrs. Whitaker said. "Father always said never to touch capital. It always was his rule."

"Things are a little different now," Charles said, "with the tax rate the way it is in the higher brackets."

"But don't you think," Albert Whitaker was asking, "that there's going to be a 20 per cent reduction across the board?"

"They're talking about it, but I wouldn't count on it," Charles said.

"If they're going to reduce taxes," Albert said, "the only sensible, democratic way would be to reduce them across the board."

"I know," Charles said, "but I'm afraid it isn't the way a politician's mind works. But there's no reason why you shouldn't sell some of these short-term governments. They scarcely yield you any income at all after taxes."

He was speaking quickly, easily, just as though their problems were his own. He was there dealing in millions just as though they belonged to him.

"You make everything seem so reasonable, Mr. Gray," Mrs. Whitaker said. "I really don't know what we'd do without you. I do hope they appreciate you at the bank as much as I do."

"I hope they do, too," Charles answered.

He picked up some of the papers on the little table in front of him as a hint that the interview was reaching a logical conclusion. If he could only leave in a few minutes, he could take the six-fifteen.

"Well," Albert said, "if everything's settled, perhaps Dorothy and I had better be pushing off."

Charles saw Dorothy rise from the edge of her chair, gracefully, without pushing herself from it.

"It stays light so long," she said, "that I keep forgetting what time it is."

But Mrs. Whitaker had picked up the pad from her knee. "I thought you told me that you didn't have any engagement until dinner, dear," she said. "Now that Mr. Gray's here, I did have a few other questions, but if you want to run along —"

"Oh, no," Dorothy said. "We're really in no hurry."

She smiled at Charles faintly and sat down again and folded her hands carefully in her lap. She did it brightly and cheerfully, without a hint of resignation, still with the ghost of a smile that was still agreeable, but Charles was sure he knew what she was thinking. Oh, God, she was thinking, here it goes again, the same damned questions.

17

Mrs. WHITAKER's mind was always filled with long, broad-gauge thoughts that mingled confusingly with little ones. There was still that matter of how to settle a little more on Albert while she was alive and thus avoid those terrible inheritance taxes. She knew, as Charles had so often said, that these were really legal problems and she had nothing at all against Mr. Stone who handled them, but she did value Mr. Gray's opinion and her father had always said that two minds were better than one.

It seemed to her that the government, which she had always been taught was created to protect

people and the things they owned, was making a deliberate effort to discourage people who had a little something. Every time she had an idea, there was always some reason against it. No one seemed to appreciate any longer what people in her position were doing. What would charities do without people in her position, what would the government do without the taxes, what would business do without the money of people in her position? She knew that she had said all these things before, but she did wish that Charles would take a copy of Mr. Stone's last letter to read and would consult with Mr. Stone when he had time.

And then there was the question of the place on Long Island. With wages rising the way they were, she wondered if Charles would mind sometime looking over the books that Mr. Stone was keeping, because she knew, although it was not in his sphere, that he would have some suggestion for cutting down. Then she wanted to know what Charles really thought of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, and besides there were several other questions, but now tea was coming in and perhaps they had better put most of it over until another day, but while they were having tea she would like to look over the whole list of securities with Albert. It was high time that someone gave them attention besides herself because she was tired of having everyone expect her to do everything alone.

"Nothing's been changed since last time," Charles said.

"I know," she said, "but I would like to look at it with Albert for a minute if you wouldn't mind waiting, Mr. Gray. Why don't you take your tea and talk with Dorothy?"

Charles rose and picked up his teacup. Dorothy had moved to a window with her highball glass in her hand, straight and tall and beautiful, smelling faintly of Chanel No. 5, looking at Park Avenue, and she smiled at Charles very sweetly.

"I'm sorry it's taken so long," Charles said.

"Why don't you take a drink?" she asked. "I would."

"Oh, no," Charles answered. "I don't believe you would."

"Well, maybe I wouldn't," she said, and she smiled again.

He saw her glance toward the sofa where Mr. Whitaker and Albert stood looking over Mrs. Whitaker's shoulder.

"I didn't know," he heard Mrs. Whitaker saying, "that we had so many shares in Homestake Mine."

Then Dorothy had turned toward him again. He was thinking, as he had often thought before at those conferences, that her beautifully molded, made-up face, the wind-blown look to her hair, had an impermeable sort of perfection. It made him nervous because there was nothing wrong about her. There was nothing wrong about her delicate hands and her pointed red fingernails, nothing wrong

about her silk print dress or her diamond clip, or her straight lithe figure, or her nylon stockings, but still there was something baffling.

"What do you do," she asked, "when you aren't doing this?"

"I go home," Charles said. "It looks as though I'm going to be late tonight."

"You make me curious. You really do."

"Why?" Charles asked.

"You make me curious because I can't picture you as doing anything but what I see you doing."

"Well," Charles answered, "now you mention it, I've been thinking the same thing about you."

Her lips curved in that same faint smile.

"That's because we're both doing what we do very well," she said, "but it takes a lot of trouble, doesn't it?"

"Well," Charles answered, "sometimes — yes."

"Do you ever wonder whether it's worth it?"

"Yes," Charles said, "occasionally. I suppose everyone does."

"That's the question," she said. "Is it worth it? I'm glad you're curious about me. I didn't know you were."

"I am," Charles said, "academically."

"You know," she said, "we ought to have a long talk sometime."

Charles squared his shoulders. He could not imagine how he could have become involved in such a conversation, and nothing would have been more undesirable than having a long talk with Dorothy Whitaker, sometime.

"It's an interesting idea," Charles said.

"It would be a lot of fun." Her smile grew broader. "If we could sit in a bar some afternoon and get quietly tight and talk —"

Charles found that he was laughing. The beauty of it was that it was so impossible, that there was nothing at all to worry about.

"You see," she said, "I'd find out what you used to be, and how you got the way you are."

"It wouldn't be worth it," Charles said. "I've always been about the same."

"Oh, no," she said, "nobody ever is. We can't help working on ourselves."

For an instant he had a picture of her working on herself, sitting before her mirror with her lipstick and her powder base, and brushing back her hair.

"Not on ourselves," he said. "Everyone works on us. Everyone wears us down."

"If you're tough enough," she said, "you don't have to be worn down."

Charles found himself laughing again.

"All right," he said, "what did you used to be?"

She shook her head slowly, and her smile had gone.

"Nicer," she said, "quite a good deal nicer."

"Oh, Mr. Gray," Mrs. Whitaker was calling, "could you come over here for a minute?"

"Good-bye," she said. "Good luck."

THE six-thirty from the upper level of the Grand Central was a good train, express to Port Chester and never crowded. Though it would get him home too late for dinner with Nancy — she'd go on to the Club without him — he welcomed the opportunity of riding in it because he could be reasonably sure of not having to talk to anyone and it gave him the chance to sort out the day, the people he had seen, and what he had done well or badly in proper order. As the train moved out of the station into the dark beneath Park Avenue, Charles laid his brief case on the vacant seat beside him and spread out the front page of the *New York World Telegram*. The headlines had the same disturbing quality as his personal thoughts, for it seemed that nothing was right that day with himself or with anything else.

The people he had seen and the things that he and they had said had no disturbing connotation in themselves. Taken separately, they were all elements that he had often encountered in any working day. Roger Blakesley and all the people at the bank were incontrovertible working facts, all with known reactions. The trust meeting, his words with Mr. Selig, his talk with Tony Burton, his conference with the Whitakers, and the activities of Roger Blakesley were all things that he had encountered often, in slightly different forms, yet taken all together they had some sort of significance that he could not express. Even the question of competition, of his having been outmaneuvered, though he was keenly conscious of it, was not the main part of that significance. There was something more in the sum of all of it that lay inside himself.

For some reason, Clyde kept coming into it, and for some reason he kept seeing events in terms of Clyde. All the things he had done that day were vaguely like things he had done in Clyde, on a different projection and a wholly different scale. The truth was that he was not much different from what he used to be. But nicer. He remembered the word nicer. Those few minutes while he stood near the window holding his teacup, at the end of that long day, held a part of that hidden significance. The train was out of the tunnel, moving by the lighted tenements of uptown New York, whose unshaded windows gave queer glimpses of other people's lives.

Since he was late, he had to take a taxi. The taxi starter, who sorted the clientele, putting those who were going in the same general direction into the same cab, was standing at the far end of the platform, a lay figure silhouetted against the headlights of the cars.

"Sycamore Park," Charles said, and the starter called out his words above the rumbling of the train that was leaving.

"Sycamore Park. Anyone else going to Sycamore Park?"

The night air was fresher and it smelled of spring, and there was a vacancy of sound after the train had left, and it seemed to have carried away everything that Charles had been thinking. Everything connected with the city — Smith Chemical, Telephone, American Tobacco B, and short-term governments — was gone with the train. He was going home again, and no one else was going to Sycamore Park. It was a great relief to be in the cab with no one but the driver. It gave him a feeling of finality, of being finished with a hard day. He was returning to the basic reason of everything for which he had been working.

Sycamore Park had been developed in 1938 on the ten-acre grounds of an old estate and the subdivision had been excellently managed by the local real estate firm of Merton and Pease. As Mr. Merton had said, it was a natural and he had never understood why someone had not dreamed it up long ago — not too far from the shopping center and the trains, and yet in the neighborhood of other larger places. Every place had its own acre, and no house was to be constructed for a cost under thirty thousand dollars. It would have been wiser, perhaps, never to have gone there but to have bought a smaller place.

It would have been wiser, easier, and much safer. He had not at that time been moved up in the trust department, and in 1939 all he had was twenty thousand dollars in savings, part of which was in life insurance. He could never analyze all the urges that made him lay everything on the line in order to live on a scale he could not immediately afford, and to discount the possibilities of illness or accident. He only remembered having had an irrational idea that time was of the essence, that he would always stay on a certain business level if he did not take some sort of action, and Nancy, too, had shared that feeling with him.

The sight of the house at Sycamore Park still gave him qualms of uneasiness. Its whitened brick, its bow window, still reminded him of what might have happened and of what he would have done if things had turned out differently. Those worries were all top secret between Nancy and himself to be shared with no one else. Yet, no matter what, that house was theirs, a tangible achievement of the past, and a sort of promissory note for the future.

Not since he had left Clyde had Charles ever felt as identified with any community as he had when he had been asked to join the Oak Knoll Country Club. He would never have thought of the idea, himself, as being possible because country clubs and that sort of thing had seemed beyond him for a long while until he and Nancy and the children had taken that step and had become homeowners in Sycamore Park. If he had not been asked, he would never have thought of it, for after paying the bills

for all the extras in the house, and bills for furnishings, on top of them, he was beginning to feel that he was getting involved in all sorts of new elaborations. They were truly in a brave new world when they had moved to Sycamore Park. They seemed to need more and better food, and different clothes, because they did not want anyone to think that they were queer in Sycamore Park.

It was a time of half-noted increases all along the line, a time of broadening horizons and new ideas, a time of new friendships and new interests that all came over you before you noticed them. When they had lived in New York, and later in Larchmont, and later in a two-family house down by the station, they had never thought of being figures in a community with real responsibilities. The truth was that success expanded everything. It was a part of a chain reaction, actually, that started with one of those shake-ups in the bank. One day, it seemed to him, though of course it was not one day, he was living in a double house, that smelled of cauliflower in the evenings, stumbling over the children's roller skates and tricycles, taking the eight-two in the morning, keeping the budget on a salary of seven thousand a year. Then in a day, though of course it was not a day, they were building at Sycamore Park, the children were going to the Academy private school, they were seeing their old friends, but not so often. They had a maid. There were dinner parties and cocktails. He was earning eleven thousand instead of six, and they were living in Sycamore Park. He was an executive with a future. New people were coming to call, all sorts of men he had hardly known were calling him Charlie. It was a great crowd in Sycamore Park and he was asked to join the Oak Knoll Country Club. They were a great crowd, in Sycamore Park.

It would have made quite a story, if it could have been written down, how all those families had come to Sycamore Park. They had all risen from a restless sea of comparative nonentity, from that mass of individuals whom you might see in any office. They had all been clerks or salesmen or assistants, digits of what was known as the white-collar class. They had come from different parts of the country, and yet they all spoke the same intellectual language, perhaps because they had all been through the same sort of adventures, on their way to Sycamore Park. They bore the same marks of the competitive struggle, and it was still too early for most of them to look back on that struggle with the complacency that they might achieve in a few years.

They were all in the position of being a little uncertainly in Sycamore Park — high enough above the average to have gained the envy of those below them, and yet not high enough so that those above them might not easily push them down. It was still necessary to balance, and sometimes even to push a little, in Sycamore Park. There was always the possibility that something might go wrong, for exam-

ple in the recession that everyone was saying was due to crop up in the next six or eight months. It was consoling to think that it would be only a recession and not the crash that they had witnessed in 1929. There would obviously be a cutting down of payrolls as soon as business began dropping off.

The people who would catch it first would be the ones in the small executive positions, whose work could be absorbed temporarily. The Sycamore Park crowd did not need to worry about this, for they were no longer in this group or they would not have been at Sycamore Park, but then they were not so far above it. Their own turn might come if the recession was too deep. Then no more Sycamore Park, and no more dreams of leaving it for something bigger, only memories of having been there once. It was something to think about as you went over your checkbook on clear, cold winter nights, wise or lucky to envisage failure. It was better to go to the Club on Thursday evenings and to talk about something else. And that was where Charles Gray was going.

He was frank enough to admit that the Oak Knoll Club was not so good as the older country club at Hawthorne Hill. It was all very well to say that the Hawthorne Hill Club was meant for old men and older dowagers, and that the Oak Knoll was a young man's club. That was what the Sycamore Park crowd always said, but any one of them would have dropped Oak Knoll like a hot potato if he had been asked to join Hawthorne Hill and could afford a share of stock. Cliff Dunbarten who kept his polo ponies and hunters at the stable at Hawthorne Hill, and who had come to Charles several times at the bank to talk to him about securities, had once asked Charles and Nancy to the house for a drink when he met them walking on Sunday, and had said that any time Charles wanted to get into Hawthorne Hill to let him know.

They might, in some sections of the town, refer to Oak Knoll as the monkey cage, and now that Charles was a member of the House Committee he could see what they meant, but at the same time you could enjoy yourself at Oak Knoll, and even some of the Hawthorne Hill crowd still kept their memberships. You did not have to worry so much about the furniture at Oak Knoll. If you wanted, you could drink a little more there. You could be more relaxed, within reason, but not if you were a member of the House Committee. When Charles was hanging up his hat and coat in the men's coatroom, the first person he saw was Cliff Dunbarten, who looked more relaxed than usual.

"Why hello," he said, "if it isn't Mr. Gray."

"That's right," Charles said. "The name's Gray," and he was tempted to go a little further. He was tempted to add, "fancy seeing you here," but he checked himself. He did not know Cliff Dunbarten well enough to be familiar. Still, they smiled at each other, and he wished very much that

he could be more like Cliff Dunbarten, being happy wherever he was and not caring a damn about anything. But then Cliff Dunbarten could afford it.

"Margie's away," Cliff Dunbarten said, and Charles realized that he must be referring to Mrs. Dunbarten. "She never can stand this place. Margie isn't what you'd call democratic, but this is quite a party."

"I wouldn't know," Charles said. "I just got here. But it must be if you say so."

"I've always kept my membership here," Cliff Dunbarten said, "out of community spirit. Frankly, Charlie, there are some very amusing types in this place. I've got to get around more, I'm having a wonderful time. How about having a drink?"

"I'd like to a little later, but not right now," Charles said.

It was obvious that Cliff Dunbarten was quite tight or he would not have called him Charlie.

"Have you got a pencil and a piece of paper?" Cliff went on. "There's a little number I was dancing with out there and I want to write her name down before I forget it."

Charles took a fountain pen from his inside pocket and tore a leaf from the back of his small black notebook. "Where does she live?" he asked.

"She's a very nice little number," Cliff Dunbarten said. "Her name is Wisher or Fisher or something, and I never would have met her if I hadn't come here. She lives in that new development, what is it? Something about a tree?"

"Every new development has something about a tree," Charles said.

"Don't interrupt me, let me concentrate." Cliff Dunbarten placed the notebook page against the wall and began writing slowly. "Bea Fisher. She asked me to call her Bea. I wish I knew what her husband's name was. She lives in that new, young executive development. I remember the name now, Sycamore Park."

"That's right," Charles said. "She's Mrs. Tom Fisher."

"How do you know?"

"Because I live there," Charles said. "I live in Sycamore Park."

"By God," Dunbarten said, "that's right, of course you do. You're the only person I've even heard of who lives there."

"Except Bea," Charles said.

"Except Bea." Cliff Dunbarten began to laugh. "Well, thanks for the pen, Charlie, and don't let the sycamores fall on you."

He was obviously quite tight.

19

WHEN Charles stepped out of the coatroom, though he felt tired he knew he ought to dance, being a member of the House Committee. His ear for music was bad, and in spite of having gone

once, secretly, for a furtive course of lessons at the Arthur Murray studio, he had never developed an interesting technique, nor had he ever entirely mastered that secret Arthur Murray step.

The tables had been cleared away from the big room and Sol Blatz and His Orchestra from Stamford were playing in one corner. Everyone said that Mr. Blatz could certainly give, and that he was a marvel with a saxophone, and Mr. Blatz could croon, too. He reached down for his saxophone as Charles was watching, and now he was holding the instrument affectionately, swaying with it, and emitting a series of relaxing, syncopated sounds. For a moment Charles tried to distinguish the beat from the melody, without any particular success, but he knew he should be seen there dancing. Without knowing what the tune was, he was sure that he had heard it during the war in officers' clubs. It made him think of other crowded rooms of men in uniform and Wacs and Waves all dancing. He could not understand why they all wanted to be there, locked, more or less impersonally, in an embrace with someone else's wife, gyrating in a slow, middle-aged manner—but then he was not musical.

The first person he saw was Bea Fisher, in the arms of Mr. Swiss. Mr. Swiss had put on weight in the last few years. His face was red, and he was talking rapidly. Then he saw Cliff Dunbarten cut in on them. Then he saw Tom Fisher, dancing with Dotty Jack, the Jacks who had bought the stucco house, the one that had been hard to sell, near the entrance to Sycamore Park. Then he saw Nancy. She was dancing with Cyril Renard, who sold life insurance downtown. Cyril had been talking to him lately about a new endowment policy, and he hoped that Cyril would not bring the subject up again that night. He edged his way carefully across the floor, and Nancy saw him and smiled. They looked as though they had been dancing for quite a while, and Cyril always wanted to change his partners quickly, for business reasons.

"Hello, Cyril," he said. "I'm going to take Nancy off your hands."

"Don't put it that way," Cyril said. "Nancy and I were talking about you and education. Where's Bill going to college?"

It was amazing how Cyril always kept business on his mind. Charles knew that he was thinking of one of those educational policies, which would both send the children to a proper school and you to a hospital, if you needed it, and pay damages, too, if the dog bit the milkman.

"Charlie, you and I ought to have a long talk sometime," Cyril said.

"All right," Charles answered. "Sometime, Cyril."

He wished that Cyril had never been taken into Oak Knoll, or at least that he would stop doing

business, but then he remembered that he had done the same thing occasionally. He put his arm hastily around Nancy and began to dance.

"Thank God you've come. I've been dancing with him for ages," Nancy said, and then she gave him a little squeeze. "Is there any news?"

"Nothing much," Charles said. "I can't talk about it here, Nancy."

"There's that Dunbarten dancing with Bea Fisher."

"Yes, I see. Did he dance with you?"

"Yes, he danced with me. It was very gracious of him."

"Oh, don't say that," Charles said, "Cliff's all right."

"Well, as long as he doesn't feel he has to exercise seigniorial rights."

"What?" Charles asked.

"Oh, nothing. All those horsy people are highly sexed. What have you been doing all day?"

"I was stuck in the Whitakers' apartment."

"Oh," Nancy said, "the Whitakers. Did anything else happen? Did you say anything to Tony Burton?"

"No," Charles said, "not exactly."

"How do you mean, not exactly?"

"What I say. Not exactly."

"Roger Blakesley's here tonight. Have you seen him?"

"No, but I've seen him all day."

"He looks exuberant."

"Oh," Charles said, "does he?"

"You look a little tired, darling."

"Well," Charles said, "I am tired. Thanks for leaving the car. Whose table did you sit at?"

"Oh, the usual crowd," Nancy said. "They all missed you."

"Well, what's all this about Cliff Dunbarten?"

But there was no time to answer. Someone had clapped him on the shoulder, and they separated. It was Christopher DeMille, who lived two doors away from them and who wrote advertising copy.

"Hello, beautiful," Christopher said. "Are you two quarreling?"

"No," Nancy said. "We're having a second honeymoon."

"You ought to see Bess and me," Christopher said. "We always get fighting here on Thursday nights. There's something in the atmosphere."

Charles moved away carefully across the dance floor. He could not imagine why anyone would think that he and Nancy had been quarreling.

Then he danced with Bea Fisher. Even though he was not a good dancer, this was always something of an adventure, not that it was not expected of him and other husbands because of poor Tom Fisher. Charles could never understand why they had taken lately to referring to Bea's husband as "poor Tom," and it did not refer to his financial status because he was doing very well. The habit

must have started with the rumor that the Fishers were not getting on, and of course this was Bea's fault and not poor Tom's. There were also a number of rumors about Bea. Other wives were beginning to say that Bea was beginning to be talked about. There was a story about Bea and a man, a house guest of the Kendricks', from New York, in poor Tom's coupé at the Labor Day dance, but no one was quite sure whether it had been Bea or that girl who had come from Old Lyme who looked like Bea. There was also the story about Bea diving into the swimming pool without a stitch on, not a stitch, but Bea herself had said that it had just been a hot summer night and she had just taken off her dress and nothing else. She was more covered than if she had worn a two-piece bathing suit. She hadn't even taken off her nylons. Still it was always an adventure, a slight step into the unknown, to dance with Bea. She was wearing a new black, sheathlike dress, and the diamond clip that poor Tom had given her.

"Hello, darling," Bea said. "Have you read any good books lately?"

"I'm trying to read one called *Peace of Mind*," Charles said, "but I don't seem to be getting very far with it."

"My God," Bea said, "you're just like Tom. What do you need peace of mind for? You know what I've been thinking? I wish I were a Catholic. I wish that someone could tell me what to do."

"That's a great idea," Charles said, "but then you wouldn't do it."

"How do you know I wouldn't?" Bea asked, and then the music stopped. "Let's get out of here. Let's go outside."

This was not desirable because everyone always noticed who Bea's partner was whenever she left the dance floor, but then it was too cool outside on the terrace to sit down, and there were other couples out there. When Bea took his arm, he knew that everyone was looking.

"Darling, are you bored?" Bea asked.

"Why, no," Charles said, "of course I'm not."

"Well, I am."

"Never mind," Charles said, and he laughed. "In just a minute or two the music will be going around and around."

"And it bores me to think of it," Bea said. "Everything goes around and around, right back to the same thing. Why can't you and I talk to each other like two sensible people. I don't mean about sex. You don't have that effect on me. To hell with sex." Her voice had a rasping quality that had a way of carrying into out-of-the-way corners, and tomorrow they would be saying that he and Bea Fisher were talking about sex.

"All right, Bea," he said, "the hell with sex. Just remember I didn't bring it up."

Then Bea began to laugh, and he was annoyed that she found the remark so amusing.

"I don't have to remember. Darling, I don't suppose you've noticed, I don't suppose you've ever seen, the efforts I've made for years, to make you bring it up."

That was why it was an adventure to dance with Bea Fisher. It was hard to tell whether or not she meant it, but at the same time it was an adventure. It made him think of Bea Fisher in the coupé on Labor Day and of Bea Fisher in the pool.

"Why, Bea," he said, "don't give up. Please try again sometime."

"For years and years," Bea said. "You're completely unassailable, darling, but then it wouldn't work anyway, would it? Our loving friends here surround us with chastity."

"What?" Charles said. "How do you mean, with chastity?"

"You know what I mean," Bea answered. Her voice carried beautifully, and he noticed that couples around them had stopped and were listening unobtrusively. "This is the chastest place I know, but that isn't what I'm talking about."

It was one of those conversations to which Bea was growing addicted lately. It was interesting, but he wished that the music would start.

"Do we know each other? Or anything about each other? Does anybody around here really know anybody else? We all call each other by our first names, we're a big happy family doing parlor tricks, but do we know each other, and I don't mean getting into bed with someone, either."

"Well, that would be a basis for acquaintance," Charles said. "At least, that's what I've heard."

"Well, it isn't," Bea said. "I don't know Tom. I don't know Tom at all."

"Listen, Bea," he said, "perhaps you're expecting too much."

"Exactly why am I expecting too much?"

"I mean," and he wished he were not being drawn into an argument, "perhaps nobody knows anyone else so very well."

"Don't you know Nancy very well?"

It was not a suitable conversation for Oak Knoll, and especially at the end of a long, hard day. It made him feel very sorry for poor Tom.

Then the music started and Charles was very glad of it, and he was glad, too, that Cliff Dunbarten had seen them and was hurrying toward them.

"Have you two about finished?" Cliff asked.

"Why, yes," Charles said. "We were talking about knowing people, and chastity."

"Chastity hasn't got anything to do with it," Bea said.

"Well, let's dance," Cliff said, "in a chaste way."

Charles watched them move toward the dance floor. It was true, what she said, though she had probably forgotten it already. Everybody there knew a lot about each other, what they ate and drank, how they disciplined their children, and each other's approximate incomes, yet it was true that

very few of them really knew each other. Very few of them were friends, perhaps none of them had time to be friends. Then he knew he should be dancing again, at least once more. Considering everything, it would be advisable to dance with Molly Blakesley, because Roger would hear if he hadn't.

No matter how advisable it might be, Charles wished that he did not have to dance with Molly Blakesley. When Roger had first brought Molly from Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he had wooed and won her, while he was a student there at the Harvard School of Business Administration, Charles had thought of her only as a plump earnest girl with glasses. She was the daughter of a Harvard Business School professor, had gone to a Cambridge progressive school, and was finishing her junior year at Radcliffe, where she was specializing in social science, when Roger had met her at her father's house on Coolidge Hill Road. She had been interested in the New Deal in those days and was writing a thesis on the Tennessee Valley Authority, which did not help her to adjust to those parties at Oak Knoll. Once Charles had made a particular effort to be kind to her, but now kindness was no longer necessary. Instead it seemed to him lately that now Molly was the one who was being kind to him.

The trouble with dancing with Molly Blakesley was that they each knew too well what the other was thinking, especially since that situation had arisen at the bank. He was thinking that Molly's dress must have come from Bergdorf's and must have cost at least a hundred and fifty dollars, which Roger could afford because the Blakesleys did not have children. They could afford all sorts of other little luxuries too, denied to Charles and Nancy. He wished that he did not keep putting their lives into terms of dollars and cents, but he always seemed to be going over expenses when he danced with Molly Blakesley. The thought flittered across his mind as he saw Molly dancing with Walter Crumm. He cut in.

"Well, well, Charlie," Walter Crumm said. "Who stole Bea away from you?"

"She said she was bored," Charles told him. "She said I was unassailable."

"Well, well," Walter said. "He didn't look unassailable, did he, Molly?"

"Oh, were you out there too?" Charles asked.

"We certainly were," Walter said, "but we won't tell Nancy, will we, Molly?"

It was all good clean fun, a part of the spirit of Oak Knoll, and you had to take it that way. Yet at the same time, Charles knew that Roger would hear of it, and it was the sort of thing that Roger might be able to use, with Tony Burton, all in good clean fun. As Charles put his arm carefully around Molly's waist, he was thinking of something he might say about Bea Fisher. But anything he thought of seemed inappropriate.

"Poor Tom," Molly said, "but it was awfully funny, Charlie. You didn't look like a banker."

"Perhaps Roger won't either," Charles said, "if Bea gets him out there."

"Roger wouldn't let Bea get him out there. You know how Roger can side-step." Molly smiled at him brightly.

"That must be the Harvard Business School training," Charles said, and he smiled back.

"Charlie," Molly said, and she stopped smiling, "seriously, do you know what Roger was saying the other night, when we were just alone in the kitchen, having a drink of beer?"

It was a time to be careful, but Charles still smiled.

"We were talking about you and Nancy, and Roger was saying how glad everyone at the bank was that you were back, Roger particularly. You know how full he is of everything at the bank. And then he said—I hope you won't think I'm silly repeating this."

"You never repeat anything that's silly, Molly," Charles said.

Molly laughed.

"I love the way you say things, that bittersweet way. Roger loves it, too. He's very fond of you, Charlie, in case you don't know it. Well, he was saying how wonderful it was that we were all such good friends, you and Nancy and all of us. And then he said he hoped we always would stay friends, no matter what happens at the bank. You know what I mean."

"Of course," Charles said. "Friendship hasn't anything to do with business, at least it shouldn't have."

"I'm awfully glad you feel that way. You won't mind if I tell Roger, will you? He has such respect for you, Charlie. It's so embarrassing, isn't it?"

"It needn't be embarrassing," Charles said. "Roger and I are grown up. We know how to handle anything that happens."

"You know," Molly spoke more quickly, "I think the war did you a lot of good, Charlie. You gained a lot from the experience. Roger thinks so, too."

Charles did not answer. He was trying to think that it was kind of her to say it. He wished that he was not always reading between the lines when he talked to Molly Blakesley.

"There's something I've never said to you," she was saying, "but I'd like to say it, Charlie. I think it was pretty splendid of you, with a wife and two children, to give up everything and go to the war. Roger thinks so, too."

He wanted to think it was kind of her to say it, but he could not bring himself to care what Roger thought.

"It was a sort of compulsion," he said. "It wasn't wise, and it wasn't much use when I got there."

"How lovely Nancy looks," Molly said. "She always looks so lovely in the simplest dress. That's what Roger always says. How are the children, Charlie?"

"Why, they're pretty well," Charles answered, "except they keep turning on the radio."

"Do you know what Roger said the other day? He's so sentimental, sometimes. He said he wished they'd call him Uncle Roger."

It was annoying and it put him in an indefensible position. He wished that he did not keep reading between the lines, and balancing Molly's kindness against certain probabilities. He was almost sure that Molly would not have made this remark if she had not heard something, which he had not heard, about the bank. And yet it was not kind to think of it that way.

"Why, that's quite an idea," he said. "They have an aunt. They haven't any uncles."

Then Owen Martin cut in on them, the Martins who lived next door.

"I'll see you later, Charlie," Molly called. "Perhaps we can do something Sunday. Roger would love it, if we could."

20

IT WAS the right psychological moment for going home, and Nancy understood it. She was waiting for him, aware it was the right time, because, as Nancy often said, she had been a working girl herself. It did not take Nancy half a minute to get her wraps on, and she knew where the key of the car was, too. She was even waiting at the steps of the Club when he drove there from the parking space, instead of allowing herself to be drawn into conversation like other people's wives.

"Move over. I'll drive," Nancy said. There was no need to say never mind, that he would not mind driving. She knew him so well that she knew he was tired, and probably, too, she knew he was disturbed about something and that the combinations of his day had not turned out very well. She knew him well enough, too, not to ask him tactless questions about what was the matter, because she knew that questions did not help. She would wait for him to tell her, because she knew he would, eventually. But then, what was there to tell? There was only disturbance within himself, a sense of premonition that things had not been going exactly right.

"These parties," he said, "sometimes they're good and sometimes they're bad. Did you have a good time, Nancy?"

"Well, yes, in a sort of long-term way."

"How do you mean, a long-term way?"

"You know," Nancy said. "It's what I've told you before. I like feeling we belong somewhere. You know it's what I've always wanted."

"Well, so do I," Charles said. "So does everyone."

He was never worried about Nancy's driving. She knew every turn on the road home, and she took each turn as unconsciously as a taxi driver.

"It isn't the same for a man," she said. "He always belongs much more than a woman, up to a certain point. A woman just has to tag along. It's nice, when she likes tagging."

"What did you do all day?" Charles asked.

There was a slight pause before she answered.

"You always ask that. You don't have to. I've had a good day."

"I know I don't have to," Charles said. "I just want to know. Why was it a good day?"

"You wouldn't understand it," Nancy said. "It's partly being a woman. Well, when I left you at the train, I took the car to the Acme place and had the choke fixed. Do you notice the engine doesn't race?"

"That's right," Charles said. "I notice now."

"Then I went to the A & P and bought some corned beef. You like corned beef, don't you?"

"How much is it a pound now?" Charles asked.

"Sixty-two cents."

"God," Charles said. "Sixty-two cents."

"Then I left Bill's shoes at that place below the drugstore, that new Italian place. Then I came back and worked on the bills."

"How were they?" Charles asked.

"They were terrible. There were two mistakes again on the Thaxter bill, always plus mistakes. I called him up about it. I wanted him to know I could add. And then the children came home, and Evelyn and I glued the back of your old chair in the hall, and then I read to Evelyn for a while. It was a very nice day."

"I'm glad you liked it," Charles said, "but I don't see why."

"Oh, I forgot," Nancy said. "Mrs. Mullin is coming to clean tomorrow, and I think she's going to come regularly, three times a week. It was a damn nice day, and I'll tell you why."

They had passed through the gates of Sycamore Park, up the blue gravel of their own short drive, and the car had stopped.

"I'll tell you why," Nancy said, "because I'm married to a damn nice man. That's the only possible reason I can think of. Now get out and open the garage door and don't jerk at it."

Charles opened it carefully and stood holding it so that it would not swing to while Nancy drove the car inside, close to the garden tools, and shut off the lights. Then she was beside him in the dark.

"And now you can give me a kiss," she said.

Only the light at the top of the stairs was lighted, but the switch was just beside the door. There was a smell of fresh floor wax from the living room, and a moist smell in the dining room from Nancy's potted plants.

"Darling," Nancy said, "isn't it a lovely house?"

"Yes, it's a swell house," Charles said, but he

was not worried about the house at the moment. Nancy had taken off her evening wrap and was straightening her hair in the mirror.

"I know it's got out about it," Nancy said, "but don't forget one thing. You and I did this by ourselves, without any so-and-so to help us. I suppose you think it's a corny thing to say, but that's why it's a nice house."

Of course a house was largely a state of mind, but his state of mind was better.

"And now come in and look at the living room floor," Nancy said. "Do you want a glass of milk before you go to bed?"

The last thing he wanted was a glass of milk, and the living room was always so neat that he had never felt at home in it. The logs in the fireplace had a little paper fan beneath them, ready for a match, but the fire was too beautifully constructed for him to want to disturb the logs by lighting them, especially so late in the evening.

"We ought to use this room more, shouldn't we?" Nancy said. "I wonder why we don't."

"That's easy," Charles said. "Because we're afraid of it."

"Well, let's not be afraid of it," Nancy said, and she lighted a cigarette. "Charlie, take off your coat and sit down on the sofa. There's no reason to worry about picking it up if Mrs. Mullin is coming three times a week. She never breaks anything." Nancy kicked off her slippers. "Don't say we're afraid of this room. I don't like it."

"Why not?" Charles asked.

"Because I don't like being afraid," Nancy said. "I don't mean that I'm afraid of anything. I only mean I don't like the idea. You know what I mean."

He knew what Nancy meant, and every word added only made a top-heavy structure, destined eventually for a clumsy fall. It was like the match game so popular before the war, that late evening pastime in which you laid a match over the mouth of the bottle and then your partner laid one beside it, and so it went until there was a structure of matches rising in the air. The loser was the one who put on the last match and tipped it over. Nancy had put on the last match. The room was uncomfortable and strange, in an entirely new way that made him seem to see it and Nancy too through a lens that had suddenly come into focus.

"Nancy," Charles said, "we didn't use to be afraid."

She was sitting opposite him, very straight, on one of those small upholstered chairs.

"Oh, are you afraid, too?" he heard her ask, and though his instinct was already preparing him to answer that of course he was not, he found himself nodding slowly.

"Well, you might have told me," Nancy said.

At least there was no need to tell what they were both afraid of because it was right there in the room. "It's all relative, you know, Nancy."

"What relative?" She spoke impatiently when she did not understand something clearly.

"The more you get, the more afraid you get. That's all I mean," Charles said. "Maybe fear's what makes the world go round."

"Not love?" Nancy said, and she tilted her head sideways. "I used to hear that it was love."

It reminded him of the first night he had taken Nancy anywhere and when they were both probably trying to impress each other. There was the same atmosphere of suspense, the same effort of trying to be at one's best, and the same intense consciousness of each other. It was almost like falling in love, an unfamiliar sensation, now, but they were talking about fear.

"Of course," Charles said. "Everyone's always afraid of something. It's chronic. Afraid of living, afraid of dying. I saw a good many people specializing on that one a while ago. Maybe it's better than being afraid of money. That's what the boys are afraid of downtown, but the point is, everybody's afraid of something. Do you know what I wish?"

"What?" Nancy asked.

"I wish we weren't always being pushed around. I'd like for once in my life to be able to tell someone to go to hell."

She was smiling at him, as he had seen her smile at Bill when he had asked for an impossible Christmas present.

"Darling," she said, "you have the most expensive tastes. You'd better just tell me to go to hell, if you want to, and let it go at that."

"All right," Charles said, "but it isn't the same thing, is it?"

"Maybe it isn't," Nancy said, "but I'm awfully glad we're afraid of the same thing. It's healthy to have things in common. Tell me, what did Molly have to say?"

"She said you looked lovely in the plainest frock," Charles said, "and Roger thinks so, too, and he wants the children to call him Uncle Roger, and they want us all to do something together on Sunday. Wait a minute, that isn't all. There's something else I've got to tell you. I'm taking the plane to Boston first thing in the morning. I'm going up to Clyde for a day or two on business, for the bank."

He saw Nancy's lips tighten. Then he saw her grind the end of her cigarette carefully into an ash tray.

"How did Clyde get into it?" she asked.

At last he was telling her the details of the meeting in the conference room and about the collateral on the loan and the stock in that company in Clyde. Then he told about Tony Burton's having called him later. It was a relief to go through it all again with Nancy because Nancy knew office politics as well as he did. It was a relief to go into it fully. Nancy was sitting up straight again, following every word.

"So you've got to go away for a day or two right now?" she asked. "At just this time?"

"Yes, it looks that way," Charles said.

"Roger Blakesley fixed it, didn't he?"

"Yes," Charles said again, "it looks that way."

"Why didn't you do anything about it? Why didn't you ask them to send someone else?"

"I thought of it," he said, "but I think that anything I might have said would have made it worse. You'd have thought so, too."

"If I'd been there, I'd have done something," Nancy said. "Something. Anything."

"No," Charles told her, "you just think so because you're here. If you'd been there, you'd have let it go. Besides—" He stopped and stared at the design on the Isfahan rug—no animals, nothing but symbols. "I don't think it makes much difference. I think Tony Burton's about made up his mind which of us he wants. It's taken him quite a while. He hates to make decisions."

Suddenly Nancy stood up.

"Then if he's made up his mind, for God's sakes why doesn't he tell you instead of letting us—letting us—" Her voice choked on the last words and she swallowed. Charles sat looking up at her.

"Because perhaps he doesn't like to do it," Charles said. "Tony's quite a nice guy, as far as anyone like him can be nice. I think we'll get the news when we go there to dinner. He almost said so."

Nancy stood looking straight ahead of her. She did not answer, and Charles went on.

"Besides, maybe it's just as well for me to be away. Tony knows Roger worked it, at least I think he knows. Maybe Roger will try a little too much. Tony's rather bright sometimes."

Nancy still stood there and he noticed that her hands were clenched.

"If he picks out that damn fool he isn't bright."

"I only said," Charles told her, "that he's pretty bright sometimes."

It made him impatient to be tied down by the trivialities of what Tony Burton thought or what Roger Blakesley did. Nancy was no longer staring in front of her at nothing. She was looking at him in a level, appraising way. She seemed to be trying to put herself in Tony Burton's place, making up her mind, balancing his faults against his advantages, wondering whether he had the personality and the broad-gauge ability to occupy one of the front desks.

"Listen," Charles said, "it doesn't do any good trying to look like a statue on a courthouse."

"If you'd only get mad," Nancy said. "Haven't

you any idea at all, which one of you he's going to take?"

Then Charles felt a slight twinge of anger, but there was nothing whatsoever he could do about it.

"Charles," Nancy asked, "what's the matter?"

"Nothing," Charles said.

"Charlie," she said, "what'll you do if he takes Roger?"

"Nancy," he said, "let's not think about it now."

But of course he was worrying about it now.

"Charlie," Nancy said, "if you'd ever done something about investing for yourself instead of for other people."

"Nance, you know very well, you don't do that when you're working for a bank."

Nancy sighed and stood up again.

"Well," she said, "I guess we'd better go to bed."

Charles stood up, too. "You go ahead," he said. "I'll be up in a few minutes. Good night, Nance."

Then after he had kissed her, she buried her head on his shoulder. She made no sound but he knew she was crying, and it always gave him a completely helpless feeling when she cried.

"Don't, Nance," he said. "The show isn't over."

"I'm sorry, Charlie," Nancy said. "I'm all right now. You always hated having me cry, didn't you?"

"Yes," Charles said. "Go on up to bed, Nance. I'll be up in just a minute."

"Are you sorry you married me?"

"No," Charles said, "of course not, Nancy. It's been swell."

"I suppose I sort of made you marry me."

"Why, Nance," Charles said, "I never noticed that you did."

"Are you sorry we had the children?"

"No, of course I'm not," Charles said.

"They were my idea more than yours. Are you sorry we bought the house?"

"Listen, Nancy," Charles said, "it happened, like the children. Now go on up and go to sleep. I'll be up in just a minute."

"What are you going to do?" Nancy asked.

"Are you going to sit here and worry?"

"No, I'm not," he told her. "I'm not sleepy. I'm going to read for a little while."

"Because if you're going to worry, we might as well do it together."

"I'm going to read," Charles said. "I'm pretty well worried out tonight. Good night, Nance." And he kissed her again, and walked with her to the foot of the stairs. "I'll be down in the library."

"Don't be long," Nancy said. "I won't be able to get to sleep till you come up."

As was the case in Frank R. Stockton's famous short story The Lady or the Tiger? the reader is left to decide for himself whether Charles Gray or Roger Blakesley is to get Tony Burton's nod. The evidence is before you. The Atlantic editorial staff has its opinion, and Mr. Marquand has his, which will not be revealed until the novel is completed. — THE EDITOR



When W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM was asked to select and edit the ten best novels in world literature, he thought at once of Stendhal, Dickens, Tolstoi, and Dostoevski; then the choice became difficult. Finally he chose three novels from France, two from Russia, one from America, and four from England, and for each book he wrote an introduction. His appraisal of Flaubert's Madame Bovary we printed in November; his essay on Fielding and Tom Jones in December; his craftsmanlike discussion of the other novels will follow in successive issues. The set of the Ten Best Novels will be published by the John C. Winston Company.

BALZAC

by W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

I

OF ALL the great novelists that have enriched with their works the spiritual treasures of the world Balzac is to my mind the greatest. He had genius. There are writers who have achieved fame on the strength of one or two books; sometimes because from the mass they have written, only a fragment has proved of enduring value; sometimes because their inspiration, growing out of a singular experience or owing to a peculiarity of temper, only served for a production of little bulk. They say their say once for all, and if they write again, repeat themselves. Fertility is a merit in a writer and Balzac's fertility was prodigious. His field was the whole life of his time, and his range as extensive as the frontiers of his country. His knowledge of men was vast, but in some directions less exact than in others, and he knew the middle class of society — doctors, lawyers, clerks and journalists, shopkeepers, village priests — better than he knew either the great world or the world of the city workers or the tillers of the soil. Like all novelists he wrote of the wicked more successfully than of the good. His observation was precise and minute. His invention was stupendous and the list of characters he created is staggering.

But I don't believe he was a very interesting man. There were no great complications in his character, no puzzling contradictions and no intricate subtleties. He was in fact rather obvious. I am not sure even that he was very intelligent; his ideas were commonplace and superficial. But he had a power of creation that was extraordinary. He was like a force of nature, a tumultuous river, for instance, overflowing its banks and sweeping everything before it, or a hurricane blustering its wild way across quiet country places or through the streets of populous cities. As a painter of society his

distinctive gift was not only to envisage men in their relations to one another — all novelists except the writers of adventure stories pure and simple do that — but also and especially in their relations to the world they live in.

Most novelists take a group of persons, sometimes no more than two or three, and treat them as though they lived under a glass ball. It often produces an effect of intensity, but at the same time, unfortunately, one of artificiality. People do not only live in their own lives, but in the lives of others: in their own they play leading parts, but in those of others sometimes important, but it may be also very small ones. You go to the barber's to get your hair cut, it means nothing to you, but it may conceivably be a turning point in the barber's life. By realizing all that this implies, Balzac was able to give a vivid and exciting impression of the multifariousness of life, its confusions and cross-purposes, and of the remoteness of the causes that result in significant effects. I think he was the first novelist to notice the importance of economics in everybody's life. He would not have thought it enough to say that money is a root of all evil; he thought the desire for money, the appetite for money, was the mainspring of human action. Money and ever money is the obsession of character after character in his novels. Their aim is to live in luxury and splendor, to have fine houses, fine horses, fine women; and all means to get what they want are good so long as they succeed. It is a vulgar aim, but I don't suppose it is less common in our day than it was in his.

If you had met Balzac in his early thirties when he was already successful, this is the man you would have seen; a little fellow, already on the fat side, with powerful shoulders and a massive chest, so

that he would not have struck you as small, with a neck like a bull's, its whiteness contrasting with the redness of his face, and red lips, very red, thick and smiling. His nose was square with wide nostrils, his brow noble; his hair, very thick and black, swept back on his skull like a lion's mane. His brown eyes, flecked with gold, had a life, a light, a magnetism that were extraordinary; they obscured the fact that his features were irregular and common. His expression was jovial, frank, and good-natured. His vitality was abounding, so that you would have felt it exhilarating merely to be in his presence. Then you might have noticed the beauty of his hands. He was very proud of them. They were like a bishop's, small, white and fleshy and the nails were rosy. If you had met him in the evening you would have found him dressed in a blue coat with gold buttons, black pants, a white vest, black silk openwork socks, patent-leather shoes, fine white linen, and yellow gloves. But if you ran across him in the daytime you would have been surprised to see him in a shabby old coat, his pants muddy, his shoes uncleaned, and in a shocking old hat.

His contemporaries are agreed that at this time he was naïve, childish, and a good sort. George Sand has said that he was sincere to the point of modesty, boastful to the point of braggadocio, confident, expansive, very good and quite crazy, drunk on water, intemperate in work and sober in other passions, equally matter-of-fact and romantic, credulous and skeptical, puzzling and contrary.

2

THE novelist's real name was Balssa, and his ancestors were farm laborers; but his father, a pettifogging attorney, having after the Revolution come up in the world, changed his name to Balzac. He married an heiress and Honoré, the eldest of his four children, was born in 1799 at Tours, where his father was administrator of the hospital. After some years at school, where he was bad and idle, he entered a lawyer's office in Paris, whither his father had been moved; but when, three years later, after he had passed the necessary examinations, it was proposed that he should make the law his profession, Balzac rebelled. He wanted to be a writer. There were violent family scenes. At last, notwithstanding the continued opposition of his mother, a severe, practical woman whom he never liked, his father yielded so far as to give him a chance. He was to live by himself with an allowance just large enough to provide a bare subsistence and try his luck.

The first thing he did was to write a tragedy on Cromwell. He read it to his assembled family. They agreed that it was worthless. It was then sent to a professor whose verdict was that the author should do whatever else he liked, but not write.

Angry and discouraged, Balzac decided, since he could not be a tragic poet, to be a novelist and he wrote two or three novels inspired by Walter Scott, Ann Radcliffe, and Byron. But his family had come to the conclusion that the experience had failed and they ordered him to come home by the first stage-coach. Balzac the elder had retired and they were living not far from Paris in a village called Villeparisis.

A friend of his, a hack writer, came to see him there and urged him to write another novel. He set to work. So began a long series of potboilers which he wrote sometimes alone, sometimes in collaboration, under a number of pseudonyms. No one knows how many books he turned out between 1821 and 1825. Some authorities claim as many as fifty. They were for the most part historical, for then Walter Scott was at the height of his renown, and they were designed to cash in on his fantastic vogue. They were very bad, but they had their use in teaching Balzac the value of swift action to hold the reader's attention and the value of dealing with the subjects that people regard as of primary importance: love, wealth, honor, and life. It may be that they taught him too, what his own proclivities must also have suggested to him, that to be read the author must concern himself with passion. Passion may be base, trivial, or unnatural, but if violent enough is not without some trace of grandeur.

While he was living at Villeparisis with his family, Balzac made the acquaintance of a neighbor, a Madame de Berny, the daughter of a German musician who had been in the service of Marie Antoinette. She was forty-five. Her husband was sickly and querulous. She had had eight children by him and one by a lover. She became Balzac's friend, then his mistress, and remained his friend till her death fourteen years later. It was a strange relation. He loved her as a lover, but he transferred to her, besides, all the love he had never felt for his mother. She was not only a mistress, but a devoted friend whose advice, encouragement, help, and disinterested affection were always his for the asking.

But the affair gave rise to scandal in the village and Madame Balzac, as was natural, did not approve of her son's entanglement with a woman old enough to be his mother. His books, moreover, brought in very little money and she was concerned about his future. A friend suggested that he should go into business, and the idea seems to have appealed to him. Madame de Berny put up forty-five thousand francs, nine thousand dollars, which then represented three or four times that amount; and with a couple of partners he became a publisher, a printer, and a type founder. He was not a businessman. He was wildly extravagant. He charged up to the firm his personal expenditures with tailors, bootmakers, jewelers, and even laun-

drymen. At the end of three years the firm went into liquidation and his mother had to provide fifty thousand francs in order to pay his creditors. The disastrous experience, however, provided him with a lot of special information and a knowledge of practical life which were useful to him in the novels he afterwards wrote.

3

AFTER the crash Balzac went to stay with friends in Brittany and there got the material for a novel, *Les Chouans*, which was his first serious work and the first which he signed with his own name. He was thirty. From then on he wrote with frenzied industry till his death twenty-one years later. The number of books, long and short, that he wrote is astounding. Every year produced one or two long novels and a dozen novelettes and short stories. Besides this he wrote a number of plays, some of which were never accepted, and of those that were, all, with one exception, lamentably failed; and for a brief period he ran a paper which appeared twice a week and most of which he wrote himself.

He was a great note-taker. Wherever he went he took his notebook and when he happened upon something that might be useful to him, got an idea of his own or was taken with someone else's, he jotted it down. When possible he visited the scene of his stories and sometimes took considerable journeys to see a street or a house that he wanted to describe. Like all novelists, I think, his characters were modeled on people he had known, but by the time he had exercised his imagination upon them they were to all intents and purposes creatures of his own imagination. He took a lot of trouble over their names, for he had the notion that the name should correspond with the character and look of the individual who bore it.

When at work he led a chaste and regular life. He went to bed soon after his evening meal and was wakened by his servant at one. He got up, put on his white robe, spotless, for he claimed that to write one should be clad in garments without stain, and then by candlelight, fortifying himself with cup after cup of black coffee, wrote with a quill from a raven's wing. He stopped writing at seven, took a bath, and lay down. Between eight and nine his publisher came to bring him proofs or to get a piece of manuscript from him; then he set to work again till noon, when he ate boiled eggs, drank water, and had more coffee; he worked till six, when he had his light dinner, which he washed down with a little Vouvray. Sometimes a friend or two would come in, but after a little conversation he went to bed.

He was not a writer who knew what he wanted to say from the start. He began with a rough draft, which he rewrote and corrected, changing the order of chapters, cutting, adding, altering, and finally

sent to the printers a manuscript which it was almost impossible to decipher. The proof was returned to him and this he treated as if it were only an outline of the projected work. He not only added words, he added sentences, not only sentences, but paragraphs, and not only paragraphs but chapters. When his proofs were set up once more with all the alterations and corrections and a fair set delivered to him, he went to work on them again and made more changes. Only after this would he consent to publication, and then only on condition that in a future edition he should be allowed to make further revisions and improvements. The expense of this resulted in constant quarrels with his publishers.

The story of his relations with editors and publishers is long, dull and sordid, and I will deal with it, as shortly as I can, only because it had an influence on his life and work. He was more than a trifle unscrupulous. He would get an advance on a book and guarantee to deliver it on a certain date and then, tempted by quick money, would discontinue it to give to another editor or publisher a novel or a story he had written post-haste. Actions were brought against him for breach of contract, and the costs and damages he had to pay greatly increased his already heavy debts. For no sooner did success come to him, bringing him contracts for books he was going to write (and sometimes never did), than he moved into a spacious apartment which he furnished at great expense and bought a cabriolet and a pair of horses. He conceived a passion for interior decoration, and the description of his various establishments is as magnificent as it is tasteless. He engaged a groom, a cook, and a manservant, bought clothes for himself and a livery for his groom, and quantities of plate which he had embossed with arms which did not belong to him. They were those of an old family of the name of Balzac and he assumed them when he added the *de*, the *particule*, to his own name to pretend that he was of noble birth.

To pay for all this grandeur he borrowed from his sister, his friends, his publishers, and signed bills that he kept on renewing. His debts continued to increase, but he continued to buy — porcelain, cabinets, pieces of buhl, pictures, statues, jewelry; he had his books bound gorgeously in morocco and one of his many canes was studded with turquoises. For one dinner he gave he had his dining-room refurnished and the decoration entirely changed. In passing I may remark that when alone he ate soberly, but in company his appetite was voracious. One of his publishers declares that at one meal he saw him eat a hundred oysters, twelve cutlets, a duck, a brace of partridges, a sole, a number of desserts, and a dozen pears. It is not surprising that in time he grew very fat and his belly enormous.

At intervals, when his creditors were more than usually pressing, many of these possessions had to

be pawned; now and then the brokers came in, seized his furniture and sold it by public auction. Nothing could cure him. To the end of his life he continued to buy with senseless extravagance. He was a shameless borrower, but so great was the admiration his genius excited, he seldom exhausted the generosity of his friends. Women are not as a rule willing lenders, but Balzac apparently found them easy. He was totally lacking in delicacy and there is no sign that he had any qualms about taking money from them.

4

It will be remembered that his mother had cut into her small fortune to save him from bankruptcy; she had dowered her two daughters, and the time came when the only property she had left was a house she rented. At last she found herself so desperately in need that she wrote a letter to her son which André Billy has quoted in his *Vie de Balzac* and which I shall translate: —

"The last letter I had from you was in November 1834. In it you agreed to give me, from April 1st 1835, two hundred francs every quarter to help me with my rent and my maid. You understood that I could not live as became my poverty; you had made your name too conspicuous and your luxury too evident for the difference in our positions not to be shocking. Such a promise as you made was for you, I think, an admitted debt. It is now April 1837, which means that you owe me for two years. Of these 1600 francs you gave me last December 500 francs as though they were a charity ungraciously bestowed. Honoré, for two years my life has been a constant nightmare, my expenses have been enormous. You weren't able to help me, I don't doubt it, but the result is that the sums I've borrowed on my house have diminished its value and now I can raise no more, and everything of value I had is in pawn; and that I've at last come to the moment when I have to say to you: 'Bread, my son.' For several weeks I've been eating that which was given me by my good son-in-law; but, Honoré, it can't go on like that: seeing that you have the means to make long and costly journeys of all sorts, costly in money and in reputation — for yours will be cruelly compromised when you come back because of the contracts you have failed to keep — when I think of all this my heart breaks! My son, as you've been able to afford yourself . . . mistresses, mounted canes, rings, silver, furniture, your mother may also without indiscretion ask you to carry out your promise. She has waited to do so till the last moment, but it has come. . . ."

To this letter he answered: "I think you'd better come to Paris and have an hour's talk with me."

What are we to say to this? His biographer says

that since genius has its rights, the morality of Balzac should not be judged by ordinary standards. That is a matter of opinion. I think it is better to acknowledge that he was grossly selfish, very unscrupulous, and none too honest. The best excuse one can make for his financial shiftiness is that with his buoyant, optimistic temper he was always firmly convinced that he was going to make vast sums out of his writings (for the time he made a great deal) and fabulous amounts out of the speculations which one after another tempted his ardent imagination. Whenever, however, he actually engaged in one the result was to leave him still more heavily in debt. He could never have been the writer he was if he had been sober, practical, and thrifty. He was a show-off; he adored luxury and he could not help spending money. He worked like a dog to fulfill his obligations, but unfortunately, before ever he paid off his more pressing debts, he had contracted new ones.

There is one curious fact worth noticing. It was only under the pressure of debt that he could bring himself to write. Then he would work till he was pale and worn-out, and in these circumstances he wrote some of his best novels; but when by some miracle he was not in harrowing straits, when the brokers left him in peace, when editors and publishers were not bringing actions, his invention seemed to fail him and he could not bring himself to put pen to paper.

5

BALZAC's literary success brought him, as success does, many new friends; and his immense vitality, his radiant good humor, made him a welcome guest in all but the most exclusive salons. One great lady to be attracted by his celebrity was the Marquise de Castries, the daughter of one duke and the niece of another who was a direct descendant of an English king. She wrote to him under an assumed name, he answered, and she wrote again disclosing her identity. He went to see her; they grew intimate and presently he went to see her every day. She was pale, blonde, and flowerlike. He fell in love with her, but though she allowed him to kiss her aristocratic hands she resisted his further advances. He scented himself, he put on new yellow gloves every day; it availed him nothing. He grew impatient and irritable and began to suspect she was playing with him. The fact is plain that she wanted an admirer and not a lover. It was doubtless flattering to have a clever young man, already famous, at her feet, but she had no intention of becoming his mistress.

The crisis came at Geneva, where, with her uncle the Duke of Fitz-James as a chaperon, they were staying on their way to Italy. No one knows exactly what happened. Balzac and the Marquise went for an excursion and he came back in tears.

It may be supposed that he made summary demands on her which she rejected in a manner that deeply mortified him. Pained and angry, feeling himself abominably used, he went back to Paris. But he was not a novelist for nothing: every experience, even the most humiliating, was grist to his mill, and the Marquise de Castries was to serve in future as a model for the heartless flirt of high rank.

While still laying fruitless siege to the great lady, Balzac had received a fan letter from Odessa signed *L'Etrangère*. A second, similarly signed, arrived after the break. He put an advertisement in the only French paper allowed to enter Russia: "*M. de B has received the communication sent to him; he has only this day been able by this paper to acknowledge it and regrets that he does not know where to send his reply.*" The writer was Evelina Hanska, a Polish lady of noble birth and immense wealth. She was thirty-two, and married, but her husband was much older. She had had five children, but only one, a girl, was living. She saw Balzac's advertisement and so arranged that she might receive his letters if he wrote to her in care of a bookseller at Odessa. A correspondence ensued.

Thus began the great passion of Balzac's life.

The letters the pair exchanged grew more intimate. In the rather exaggerated manner of the time, Balzac laid bare his heart in such a way as to arouse the lady's pity and sympathy. She was romantic and bored with the monotony of domestic life in the great château in the Ukraine in the middle of fifty thousand acres of flat land. She admired the author, she was interested in the man. When they had been exchanging letters for a couple of years Madame Hanska with her husband, who was in bad health, her daughter, a governess, and a retinue of servants went to Neuchâtel in Switzerland; and there on her invitation Balzac went too. There is a romantic account of how they met. He was walking in the public gardens when he saw a lady sitting on a bench reading a book. She dropped her handkerchief, and on picking it up he noticed that the book was one of his. He spoke. It was the woman he had come to see.

At this time she was a handsome creature, of somewhat opulent charms; her eyes were fine, though with ever so slight a cast, her hair was beautiful and her mouth lovely. She may have been a trifle taken aback at the first sight of the fat, red-faced man, like a butcher in appearance, who had written her such lyrical and passionate letters, but if she was, the brilliance of his gold-flecked eyes, his abounding vitality, made her forget it and in no long time he became her lover. After some weeks he was obliged to go back to Paris and they parted with the arrangement that they should meet again early in the winter at Geneva. He arrived for Christmas and spent another six weeks there during which he wrote *La Duchesse de Lan-*

geais, in which he revenged himself on Madame de Castries for the affront she had made him suffer.

On his return to Paris he met a Countess Guidoboni-Visconti. She was an ash-blonde, but voluptuous, an Englishwoman, notoriously unfaithful to an easygoing husband, and Balzac was immediately fascinated by her. She was more than kind. But the romantics of those days conducted their love affairs as it were on the front page of a tabloid, and before long Madame Hanska, then in Vienna, heard of Balzac's new infatuation. She wrote a letter to him, full of bitter reproaches, in which she announced that she was about to go back to the Ukraine. It was a shock. He had been counting upon marrying her on the death of her husband and being put in possession of her vast fortune. He borrowed two thousand francs and hurried off to Vienna to make his peace. He traveled as the Marquis de Balzac, with his bogus coat of arms on his luggage; and a valet; this added to the expense of the journey since it was beneath his dignity to haggle and he had to give tips suitable to the rank he had assumed. He arrived penniless. Madame Hanska heaped more reproaches on him and he had to lie his head off to allay her suspicions. Three weeks later she left for the Ukraine and they did not meet again for eight years.

6

BALZAC went back to Paris and immediately resumed his relations with the Countess Guidoboni. For her sake he indulged in extravagance wilder than ever. He was arrested for debt and she paid the sum necessary, a considerable one, to save him from going to prison. From then on, from time to time, she came to the rescue when his financial situation was desperate. In 1836, to his great grief, Madame de Berny, his first mistress, died, and he said of her that she was the only woman he had ever loved: others have said that she was the only woman who had ever loved him. In the same year the blonde Countess informed him that she was with child by him. When it was born, her husband, a tolerant man, remarked: "Well, I knew that Madame wanted a dark child. So she's got what she wanted."

In passing it may be mentioned that in the course of his amorous career the great novelist had by different mistresses one boy and three girls. He seems to have taken singularly little interest in them. Of his other affairs I will only mention one, with a widow called Hélène de Valette, because it began as had those with the Marquise de Castries and Madame Hanska by a fan letter. It is odd that three of his five chief love affairs should have started in this way. It may be that that is why they were unsatisfactory. When a woman is attracted to a man by his fame she is too much concerned with the credit she may get through the connection with him

to be capable of that blessed something of disinterestedness that genuine love evokes. She is a thwarted exhibitionist who snatches at a chance to gratify her instinct. The affair with Hélène de Valette did not last long and seems to have come to an end in a dispute over ten thousand francs Balzac had borrowed from her.

At last the moment he had been so long awaiting arrived. Monsieur Hanska died in 1842. At last Balzac's dreams were to come true. At last he was going to be rich. At last he was going to be free of his petty, bourgeois debts. But the letter in which Evelina told him of the death of her husband was followed by another in which she told him that she would not marry him. She could not forgive him his infidelities, his extravagance, his debts. He was reduced to despair. She had told him in Vienna that she did not expect him to be physically faithful so long as she had his heart. Well, that she had always had. He was outraged by her injustice. He came to the conclusion that he could only win her back by seeing her, and so, after a good deal of correspondence, notwithstanding her reluctance, he made the journey to St. Petersburg, where she was then living. He was forty-three and she was forty-two. They were fat and middle-aged. His calculations were correct. It looks as though when with him she could refuse him nothing. They became lovers again and again she promised to marry him.

It was seven years before she kept her promise. The biographers have been puzzled to know why she hesitated so long, but surely the reasons are not far to seek. She was a great lady, proud of her noble lineage; it is likely enough that she saw a big difference between being the mistress of a celebrated author and the wife of a vulgar upstart. Her family must have done all they could to persuade her not to contract such an unsuitable alliance. She had a marriageable daughter whom it was her duty to settle in accordance with her rank and circumstances. Balzac was a notorious spendthrift; she may well have feared that he would play ducks and drakes with her fortune. He was always wanting money from her. He did not dip into her purse, he plunged both hands in it. She was rich and herself extravagant, but it is very different to fling your money about for your own pleasure and to have someone else fling it about for his.

The strange thing is not that Evelina Hanska waited so long to marry Balzac, but that she married him at all. During those seven years they saw one another from time to time and as a result of one of these meetings she became pregnant. Balzac was enchanted. He thought he had won at last and begged her to marry him at once; but she, unwilling to have her hand forced, wrote to tell him that after her confinement she intended to go back to the Ukraine to economize and would marry him later. The child was born dead. This was in 1845 or 1846.

She married him in 1850. Balzac had spent the winter with her in the Ukraine and the ceremony took place there.

Why did she finally consent? His prolonged and arduous labor had at length shattered his vigorous constitution, and his health for some time had been failing. During the winter he was very ill, and though he recovered it was evident that he had not long to live. Perhaps she was moved to pity for a dying man who notwithstanding his infidelities had loved her so long and constantly; perhaps her confessor, for she was a devout woman, urged her to regularize her unconventional situation. Anyhow she married him and they went back to Paris, where on her money he had bought and expensively furnished a large house. But she was no longer a rich woman. She had dispossessed herself of her vast possessions in favor of her daughter and retained only a moderate annuity. If Balzac was disappointed he made no sign of it.

It is lamentable to have to relate that after all this eager waiting, when at last his hopes were realized, the marriage was not a success. Evelina made him unhappy. He fell ill again and this time he did not recover. He died on August 17, 1850. Evelina was heartbroken and in a letter to a friend wrote that now she desired nothing but to rejoin her husband in the world beyond; she consoled herself, however, sufficiently to take as her lover a painter called Jean Gigoux and nicknamed Pou-Gris (Gray Louse) on account of his ugliness. He does not appear to have been a good painter.

7

It is not easy out of Balzac's immense production to choose the novel that best represents him. In almost all there are at least two or three characters that, because they are obsessed by a simple, primitive passion, stand out with unforgettable force. It was in the depiction of just such characters that his strength lay; when he had to deal with a character of any complexity he was less happy. In almost all his novels there are scenes of great power and in several an absorbing story. I have chosen *Le Père Goriot* for several reasons. The story it tells is continuously interesting. In some of his novels Balzac interrupts his narrative to discourse upon all kinds of irrelevant matters, but from this defect *Le Père Goriot* is on the whole free. He lets his characters explain themselves by their words and actions as objectively as it was in his nature to do. *Le Père Goriot* is well constructed and the two threads, the old man's self-sacrificing love for his ungrateful daughters, the ambitious Rastignac's first steps in the crowded, corrupt Paris of his day, are plausibly interwoven.

Le Père Goriot is interesting also because it was in this novel that Balzac first systematically applied the notion of bringing the same characters into

novel after novel. The difficulty is that you must create characters who interest you so much that you want to know what happens to them as their lives go on. Balzac here triumphantly succeeds and, speaking for myself, I read with added enjoyment the novels in which I learn what has become of certain persons, Rastignac for instance, whose future I have been eager to know about.

The device is useful because it is an economy of invention, but I don't believe Balzac, with his inexhaustible fertility, resorted to it on that account. I think he felt it added reality to his narrative, for in the ordinary course of events we do have repeated contacts with a fair proportion of the same people; but more than that, I think his main object was to knit his whole work together in a comprehensive unity. His aim was not to depict a group, a set, a class, or even a society, but a period and a civilization. He suffered from the delusion, too common to his countrymen, that France, whatever disasters had befallen it, was the center of the universe; but perhaps it was just on that account that he had the self-assurance to create a world, multicolored, various, and profuse, and the power to give it the convincing throb of life.

But this concerns *The Human Comedy* as a whole. Here I am concerned only with *Le Père Goriot*. I believe Balzac to have been the first novelist to use a boardinghouse as the setting for a story. It has been used since many times, for it is a convenient way of enabling the author to present together a variety of characters in various predicaments, but I don't know that it has ever been used as in *Le Père Goriot*.

Balzac started his novels slowly. His method was to begin with a detailed description of the scene of action. He apparently took so much pleasure in these descriptions that he often tells you more than you want to know. He never learned the art of saying only what has to be said and not saying what needn't be said. Then he tells you what his characters look like, what their dispositions are, their origins, their habits, their ideas, their defects; and only after this, sets out to tell his story. His characters are seen through his own exuberant temperament and their reality is not quite that of real life; they are painted in primary colors, vivid and sometimes garish, and they are more exciting

than ordinary people; but they live and breathe; and you believe in them, I think, because Balzac so intensely believed in them himself. In several of his novels a clever, honest doctor called Bianchon appears; when Balzac was dying he said: "Send for Bianchon. Bianchon will save me."

Le Père Goriot is noteworthy also because in it we meet for the first time one of the most thrilling characters Balzac ever created: Vautrin. The type has been reproduced a thousand times but never with such striking and picturesque force, not with such convincing realism. Vautrin has a good brain, will power, and immense vitality. It is worth the reader's while to notice how skillfully Balzac, without giving away a secret he wanted to keep till the end of the book, has managed to suggest that there is something sinister in the man. He is jovial, generous, and good-natured; he is strong, uncommonly clever, self-possessed; you not only admire him, you sympathize with him, and yet he is strangely frightening. You are fascinated by him, as was Rastignac, the ambitious, well-born young man who comes to Paris to make his way in the world; but you feel the same instinctive uneasiness as Rastignac felt. Vautrin may be a figure of melodrama, but he is a great creation.

It is generally agreed that Balzac wrote badly. He was a vulgar man (but was not his vulgarity an integral part of his genius?) and his prose was vulgar. It was prolix, pretentious, and too often incorrect. Émile Faguet, a very distinguished critic, in his book on Balzac has given a whole chapter to the faults of taste, style, syntax and language of which the author was guilty. And indeed some of them are so gross that it needs no profound knowledge of French to perceive them. They are frankly shocking. Now it is admitted that Charles Dickens wrote English none too well and I have been told by cultivated Russians that Tolstoi and Dostoevski wrote Russian very indifferently. It is odd that the four greatest novelists the world has known should have written their respective languages so ill. It looks as though to write well were not the essential part of the novelist's equipment; but that vigor and vitality, imagination, creative force, observation, knowledge of human nature, with an interest in it and sympathy with it are more important. All the same it is better to write well than badly.

(The next novel to be discussed by Mr. Maugham will be Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*.)



When GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., graduated from West Point in 1909, he was Adjutant of his class and a fine horseman, swimmer, and marksman. He was our tank expert in 1917-1918 and despite a serious wound proved the leadership which was to make him the most feared army commander in the Second World War. These letters, written to Frederick Ayer, are the affectionate record of a commander who was eager, audacious, proud of his men, wryly humorous, and implacable towards the enemy. This is the last of three installments.

GENERAL PATTON'S WAR LETTERS

From Luxembourg and Germany

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Luxembourg
January 5, 1945

Your letter of December 21 was written just the day before I changed ends, so to speak. I really believe that the said change of ends was the most brilliant operation ever performed, and was due wholly to my staff and to the tremendous efficiency of the veteran American soldiers who now compose our armies.

At the present time the fighting is very hot, but we are retaining the initiative and killing more Germans than I have ever previously accounted for.

I met Alex Standish, who is Assistant G-2 in the Twelfth Army Group, and who is doing a very fine job. His ability to forecast money trends helps him to forecast what the enemy is going to do.

I really feel that, although the German breakthrough was regrettable, it may terminate the war sooner than if they had not broken through because, when they fail, as they will (or as they have) there will be nothing to look forward to. Of course they have an uncanny method of pulling new troops out of the hat, but at the moment it seems to me that they have everything in they can possibly put in, while we still have a few cards up our sleeve.

The weather here would be very enjoyable to you, as you can ski over the entire country. I have never seen so much snow and ice in my life, and never want to see any more. It is a continuous source of wonder to me that soldiers can fight under such conditions.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Luxembourg
January 24, 1945

Replying to your letter of the 28th, our bag of 29,000 was simply captured and buried Germans for the ten days' operation from November 8 to November 18. Our total bag for the 3d Army since August 1 amounts to 490,500, and our total

bag from December 22 till January 18 aggregates 106,500, so we have not done too badly. On the other hand, we have had considerable losses ourselves, which I am not at liberty to state. Above is 3d Army only.

At the present moment, we are pursuing the Germans quite rapidly, and it is possible, although not better than that, that our efforts, combined with those of the Russians, may terminate this show sooner than is now anticipated, unless for reasons beyond our control we stop what we are doing now and do something else. On several occasions we have followed this unfortunate policy — or at least it seems so from my worm's-eye view.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Luxembourg
February 6, 1945

We are having a very funny battle right now. I am taking one of the longest chances of my chancy career; in fact, almost disobeying orders in order to attack, my theory being that if I win nobody will say anything, and I am sure I will win; in which case it may well be that I can turn loose armored divisions and re-enact the Brest Peninsula show — of course not quite so fast as the weather is abominable, but still to a degree.

There is no violation of security in telling you this, because long before you get the letter the event will be history, or it may not even appear in the papers if it fails.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Luxembourg
February 21, 1945

Yesterday, I was on a trip which you would have enjoyed a great deal.

First, I visited the place where we crossed the Sauer and Our Rivers. It was really an incredible feat of arms. The river at the time of crossing was about 200 yards wide and running about 9 miles

an hour through a gorge which could be only approached down four gullies.

The Germans were on the far side where they had been constructing pillboxes since 1939. We were on this side.

We attacked with two divisions. The one on the right, the 5th, elected to go by surprise; the one on the left, the 80th, decided on a preparation. The results seemed to show that either system is all right if there are stouthearted men making the attack.

The chief losses, aside from enemy fire, came from the water. One day we lost 139 assault boats. Of course, we did not lose the crews of all of them.

These assault boats would be ideal for coot shooting, but are very poor for river crossings. They hold six men and are practically square and work by paddles, which practically no one knows how to work.

The first time I visited this spot the enemy was still shelling it, and we had to keep up a smoke screen so that he could not see whether he hit the bridges. There were a bunch of engineers building a bridge, and I remarked that I had never seen so many small men working so hard; apparently they overheard my remark. When I was there yesterday, things were somewhat quieter, and they had finished the bridge and had a large sign on it, "The General Patton Bridge, built by the Mighty Midgets." It was really quite a thing to do.

Some of the pillboxes covering the bridge were fantastic in their efficiency. There was one at the end of the Midget Bridge which was constructed out of the hardest concrete I have ever seen, because our 90 mm.'s firing at 400 yards bounced off. However, we got a direct hit through the embrasure and cleaned out everyone inside.

Another one was built inside of a stone house. What I believe the Germans did was to take the house, remove the inside, and then build the pillbox. When the fight started, they simply pushed out or shot out the walls in front of the embrasures and opened fire.

Another pillbox was camouflaged to look like a wooden barn and was perfectly harmless unless you opened the barn door, in which case an 88 mm. gun stuck out through 10 feet of concrete.

However, the whole thing proves that people who build walls or ditches or pillboxes, or think that the ocean can defend them are gullible fools. No form of defense is worth a damn.

We took in this particular place some 200 pillboxes by storm according to the following principles: —

You first locate the pillbox by being shot at from it. You then locate at least three others covering the one you are working on, usually by the same method of being shot at.

You then detail men to shoot at the eye slits of the pillbox, and as soon as you have discouraged

the Germans, which is not difficult, because the eye slit or embrasure is sort of a bull's-eye at which anyone can shoot, you then have a soldier go up with about ten pounds of TNT, fastened to a thing which looks very much like a for-sale sign, except with a longer stick. This he pushes up against the two-inch steel door of the back of the pillbox, lights a short piece of fuse, and crawls around the corner, putting his fingers in his ears.

When the explosion takes place, the people inside are either killed or stunned, which in a good many cases means the same thing because soldiers are not too gentle removing people who have been shooting at them.

We next visited the Corps to the north where the roads are terrible. I drove for about five hours along troughs of what looked like rather rich cocoa. However, the American soldier and the American equipment have conquered them. We have cut down whole forests with electric saws and built a corduroy road which we have covered with rock with our bulldozers.

Yesterday we had a very lucky attack and finally succeeded in capturing the so-called triangle between the Moselle and Saar Rivers.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Idar-Oberstein (Germany)
March 29, 1945

I don't know what the people at home are saying about it, but the operations of the 3d Army, which culminated on the 22d of March with the complete destruction of the 7th and 1st German Armies — in which operations we took 6000-odd square miles of Germany, liberated or captured 3000 towns, including Trier, Coblenz, Worms, etc., and captured over 140,000 prisoners and killed or wounded over 90,000 Germans — are probably the greatest defeat ever suffered by an enemy in the history of war and executed at the lowest cost to us.

General Giraud of the French Army was visiting me yesterday, and I told him that I thought our success had been chiefly due to luck. He replied, "No, to audacity," and I believe he was right.

Since crossing the Rhine on the 22d of March (thirty-six hours before the British did and thereby stealing their show) we have advanced about 65 miles and took an additional 8000 prisoners today.

Some days ago I heard of an American prisoner of war camp about 60 miles to my east, so I sent an armored expedition to get it. So far I have not been able to hear what they did.

We have gone back to living in our trucks as we move pretty often now. The next move will be across the Rhine.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Frankfurt
April 10, 1945

Replying to your letter, the current was actually 9 m.p.h. Of course the boats landed further down-

stream from where they took off, which enhanced the complications of the operation.

By the time your letter reached me, my letter on the superiority of the American tank had already been published. It was not requested. I simply heard a lot of loose talk about the inferiority of the American tank and corrected it on my own initiative.

With respect to prisoners of war, we have taken 420,511 and buried 25,691 to date. Of course the estimated German casualties are much higher. They bury over 80 per cent.

I know nothing about the union activities at home, but I can say that at the moment we have all the ammunition we need.

The Ludendorff Bridge was captured after an attempt had been made to destroy it. It fell on account of the excessively heavy traffic to which the weaker part was subjected and not as the result of enemy action. But before it fell, we had two bridges in.

We are moving our Command Post again tomorrow.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Erlangen
May 1, 1945

The war is sort of dragging itself out to a non-spectacular termination. There is still a possibility that I will run into the Sixth German Panzer Army, but in my opinion, the total strength of that Army does not exceed that of one American armored division, and since I have four armored divisions and thirteen infantry divisions, the Sixth Panzer Army will be in a bad way.

Judging from the last war, when one gets to the point where the enemy starts making rumors of peace, his fighting value completely disappears. We have been taking tremendous numbers of prisoners.

In the last nine days, for example, we have taken 129,000-odd. During the same period, the battle losses of this Army have aggregated 1767, the non-battle, 2686, or a total of 4453, so that you can see we are trading pretty well when you consider that the strength of the 3d Army at the present time is slightly in excess of 426,000 men.

Of course the figures I am giving with reference to our own casualties are not for publication. There is no objection to telling people how many of the enemy we are catching. In this connection, our total official bag of enemy prisoners since the first of August, 1944, is 688,984, and we estimate that we have killed and wounded an additional 500,000. In tanks, we are still trading better than two to one; that is, two Germans for one American tank.

Major Stiller, my Aide, who was captured by the Germans a month ago, was yesterday liberated and we are all very glad to have him back.

I believe that John Waters [his son-in-law, who had been a prisoner] left for America by air today or yesterday.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Bad Tölz
May 24, 1945

We have just moved into our 23d CP, which is situated in the city of Bad Tölz. The Headquarters is in a Nazi Youth school building which is the best laid out building I have ever seen. If I were planning a Headquarters building for an Army, I would copy it.

We live in a house about fifteen minutes from here on a lake. It belonged to the No. 3 Public Enemy, Mr. Emman, who is alleged to have been Hitler's First Sergeant in the last war and who made his money by publishing *Mein Kampf*. Also, Hitler confiscated a Jewish newspaper and sold it to Emman for 100,000 marks when it was worth about a million marks. As a result he has one of the best houses I have ever seen. It has a bowling alley, a swimming pool, a large number of rooms, a boat-house and two boats — the latter are not very good. If one has to occupy Germany, this is a good place to do it from.

We are in the foothills of the Alps and consequently it is quite chilly in the morning.

I agree with you with respect to de Gaulle and Giraud, but unfortunately Giraud is not fast enough on his feet. In my opinion, France is about shot. Any country in which the women rule has always been on the way out. The middle-class women of France have ruled it for years, but the rule is becoming more obvious.

We had a little excitement with Tito in the hills south of here, but nothing came of it except that I had to move five divisions. Some of the passes still had 15 feet of snow in them.

Germany is really a very depressing place. It is said that there are $3\frac{1}{2}$ women to every man. Certainly in the parts I have seen that isn't an adequate proportion. I think that this non-fraternization is very stupid. If we are going to keep American soldiers in a country, they have to have some civilians to talk to; furthermore, I think we could do a lot for the German civilians by letting our soldiers talk to their young people.

I will probably see you before you get this letter.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Bad Tölz
August 6, 1945

The article you gave me on British economy as the result of the election is no more depressing than what all the people over here, with whom I have discussed it, have said. There are, practically, in the world $3\frac{1}{2}$ nations who can manufacture; namely, the United States, England, Russia, and half of France, but of this group of four nations, there is only one that can buy; namely, us. Of course, South America is a market, but to what extent I do not know. Many of us, including British, view the destruction of Germany with great alarm. I have always viewed it that way, but the others only since they have become better acquainted

with the Mongolians. However, I do not believe that Germany, as a manufacturing nation, can come into effect for two or three years, and then only the part in the hands of the British and Americans. As usual, we have sold our birthright and have given up all the coal and iron regions to the French and English. Some people, who claim to be politicians, express the belief that the present government in England will not last very long. I do not know on just what they base this, except that after the last war, something similar happened.

[Headquarters 3d U.S. Army,
Office of Commanding General]

Bad Tölz
August 21, 1945

So far as the atomic bomb is concerned, I think that its advent was most unfortunate because now it will give the pacifists a chance to state that there can be no more wars, which has been their favorite thesis and chief means of producing wars for the last 6000 years. Actually, the advent of the atomic bomb was no more startling than was the act of the first man who picked up a rock and bashed out the brains of another man, thereby spoiling the age-old method of fighting with teeth and toenails. Certainly the atomic bomb was not as startling as the first cannon or the first gasoline motor or the first submarine. I am not decrying the intelligence of those who devised it, but I am decrying the lack of intelligence of those who will use it as a means of making our country defenseless. The only way to stop atomic bombing of a country by self-propelled bombs, which is what we will get at the beginning of the next war, is to be able to invade the country sending the bombs and destroy their place of construction. We have proved definitely that you cannot put factories out from the air.

HEADQUARTERS
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY
APO 403

July 13, 1945

GENERAL NOTES ON REMARKS TO BE MADE
TO DIVISIONS

You men have just won a great war. You won it because you were better trained, better equipped, better clothed, and better fed than any soldiers in the history of the world. I sometimes wonder if you fully realize how very great you are.

During combat, I talked to every unit which it was possible to reach, and I told you what to expect in battle and the best methods of rapidly, cheaply, and decidedly defeating the enemy. The record of your achievement speaks for itself. As a moderate estimate, we killed, wounded, or captured ten Germans for every American we lost, killed or wounded.

Now that all or nearly all of you are returning to civil life, I believe that I should continue to

do my best to instruct you how to save your lives and the lives of your children. I realize that in doing this I shall be criticized, but my conscience will be much clearer in the knowledge that I have done my duty as I see it, and have evoked criticism, than it would be if I avoided criticism and left my duty unperformed.

It is certain that the two World Wars in which I have participated would not have occurred had we been prepared. It is my belief that adequate preparation on our part would have prevented or materially shortened all our other wars beginning with that of 1812. Yet, after each of our wars, there has always been a great hue and cry to the effect that there will be no more wars; that disarmament is the sure road to health, happiness, and peace; and that by removing the fire department, we will remove fires. These ideas spring from wishful thinking and from the erroneous belief that wars result from logical processes. There is no logic in wars. They are produced by madmen. No man can say when future madmen will reappear. I do not say that there will be more wars; I devoutly hope that there will not, but I do say that the chances of avoiding future wars will be greatly enhanced if we are ready.

At school, the big strong boy seldom gets in fights. His companions know his capacity, and he respects their weakness. A prepared America is a big strong boy; but a big or little boy who is not physically strong, and particularly one who indulges in unsolicited advice, gets into many fights until at last he is so badly mauled that he loses his manhood. Remember this, and remember further that preparedness must be both physical, mental, and spiritual. If we have, as we could have, the greatest Army, Navy, and Air Force in the world, and yet are not mentally and spiritually prepared to do our duty as men, our efforts will be only partially successful. Many of you know by personal experience how difficult it was to adjust yourselves to the brutal realities of battle after a lifetime of being told that there would be no more wars. If we produce another generation similarly indoctrinated, we may not be able to win the battles.

Twice in my lifetime, America, the Arsenal of Democracy, has come from behind to ensure victory. Is it not evident that should another war arise, those producing it will make every effort to see that the Arsenal of Democracy is knocked out in the first round? How this can be done I do not know, but I do know that the progress made in airplanes and self-propelled missiles is such that the possibility of an early knockout cannot be discounted.

Perhaps a good illustration of what I am trying to put across to you is this: when I went to school, and I presume it is the same now, all the children were taught how to form in column and march out of the building in an orderly manner in case of fire.

This instruction did not, so far as I know, produce fires, but when fires occurred, the lives of the majority of the children were saved. If we go to the extreme of saying that preparedness produces wars, then the instruction in fire drill would produce fires. Therefore, we should not teach children that a fire may come, that the building may burn; and as a result, have the sad duty of removing the charred little bodies from the ruined schoolhouse.

You men are all American citizens, and in your generation you will have a very large voice in determining the election of our public servants and the enforcement of our laws. I am sure that you have found out that discipline, self-reliance, and mutual respect and faith are necessary in the Army. These traits are just as necessary in civil life. Laws which are not enforced had better not be promulgated.

Referring again to the fire department aspect of the prevention of war, a very large proportion of

the duties of the fire departments in large cities is not the extinguishing of fires, but their prevention through advice and supervision. You men are all potential firemen. You have put out the fire by your heroic efforts. It is now your duty as citizens to see that other fires do not occur, and that you and your children are not again called upon to extinguish them.

I have been speaking to you not as your Commanding General, but rather as an old man to young men. I am in no way trying to propagandize you, but as I said before, it is my considered opinion that my duty demands that I should explain to you things as I see them.

In closing, let me say that it is my profound hope that we shall never again be engaged in war, but also let me remind you of the words attributed to George Washington: "In time of peace, prepare for war." That advice is still good.

G. S. PATTON, JR.
General



THE PEACE OF LAZARUS

by LEONARD BACON

AT HIS ease in Abraham's bosom kind Lazarus lay asleep.
When far away the thunders rebellowed from the Deep.
And then did Abraham say:
"Go down, my son, straightway,
And help them make the Peace which they must keep.

"The Word has lost its meaning that was preached to them of old
When they thought that Peace was purchased with their silver and their gold.
And so go down, my son,
For His will it must be done,
And proclaim a better Faith which they must hold."

And Lazarus descended, and to every man he spake.
Yet the gospel was rejected, which he preached for all men's sake.
For the dogs yet licked their sores,
Who were wounded in the Wars,
And none of them would give, though all would take.

And against whate'er he taught them every man of them rebelled,
Saying: "Give us back the City where of old our fathers dwelled.

We shall take our heart's desire,
Though it be by steel and fire,
And who will not have it so must be compelled."

Thus Cimmeria and Scythia spake with him in the way
And the ultimate of Thules and the uttermost Cathay.
And Atlantis by her seas
Had no better thought than these.
And Carchedon and Gades said him nay.

Rose up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece.
And too well he saw their anger and their agony increase,
While Dives in his rags
By his gutted money-bags
Mocked Lazarus who could not make the Peace.

Said Dives unto Lazarus: "I saw thee once on high
From my couch among the torments. Art thou better now than I?
Well Father Abraham said:
'If a man rose from the dead,
They would but gibe to hear him prophesy.'

"They will rend the main foundations of the universe apart,
For by their ghastly science they have found the ghastly art,
Whose planet-splitting blast
Shall deliver men at last
From the sorrow of the mind and of the heart.

"Unless thy wit prevent it, greater ill than ever chanced
Shall overcome this people when the banners are advanced.
It may be, my brother, thou
Hast the guile to curb it now.
I could not. But avert it, if thou canst.

"Their thought is void of virtue, as their action is inept.
And they will not keep the faith — as if faith were ever kept.
Hast thou then some loving-kindness
That will heal them of their blindness?
O Lazarus, what help?" And Dives wept.





A novelist and one of the leading teachers of composition in this country, WALLACE STEGNER divides his time between his English courses at Stanford University and his forays into the remote woods and canyons of the West, trips which renew his spirit and his writing. Western born, he spent his boyhood now under canvas in the deep woods of Washington, now on a remote farm on the Saskatchewan-Montana boundary, and later on the shores of the Missouri. Readers will remember his novels, The Big Rock Candy Mountain and Second Growth.

BACKROADS RIVER

by WALLACE STEGNER

I

TO START a trip at Mexican Hat, Utah, is to start off into empty space from the end of the world. The space that surrounds Mexican Hat is filled only with what the natives describe as "a lot of rocks, a lot of sand, more rocks, more sand, and wind enough to blow it away." The nearest rail point is at Thompsons, up north on the Denver and Rio Grande, 175 miles away by road.

This road, the only real road in the area, has an advantage which some of this country's roads do not: it can be traveled both ways. You can come down Highway 160, which links Salt Lake with Mesa Verde and Santa Fe, and follow the diminishing trail through Blanding and Bluff to Mexican Hat. Or you can come up from Grand Canyon across the Hopi and western Navajo reservations by way of Moenkopi, Tonalea, Kayenta, and Monument Valley. Or if you have no mercy on your car, you can come up from Gallup to Shiprock and then take out over the axle-breaking trail to Kayenta by way of Dinnehotso. Or you can fight your way up from the southern Navajo country over wagon tracks deep in sand. When you reach Mexican Hat you are at the end of the world and the beginning of the San Juan country.

It is useful to know where you are. On a map of Utah notice how the Colorado River cuts across the state from northeast to southwest, blocking off a great triangle in Utah's southeast corner. All but the tip of this triangle is San Juan County. Just a trifle smaller than Massachusetts, a little bigger than Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Delaware combined, the county was formed in 1880 before it had any white population. At the last census its population was still under 5000, and a third of that number were Navajos and Paiutes.

The first automobile crossed the sandy fifty-five miles across Monument Valley between Kayenta and Mexican Hat in 1921. There has been more

traffic since, but not too much. This is not real tourist country, irrigated by foreign dollars. This is a scenic dry-farm, the biggest and almost the last. The wilderness stretches out on every side from the San Juan country, a primitive area at least a hundred miles square. But the San Juan country proper, between the Abajo Mountains and Monument Valley, and between the Colorado boundary and Glen Canyon of the Colorado, is the heart of the last great wilderness. Through the middle of it, flowing in a continuous canyon to its junction with the Colorado 133 miles westward, runs the San Juan River, as little known and as little celebrated as the country it drains.

The dozen of us who gather in Mexican Hat Lodge on the evening of June 5 have a date with the river. We are a motley crowd: a movie photographer and his wife, a pair of engineers, a dentist's assistant, a physical education instructor, a radio technician, a few plain tourists, an old lady of seventy-two, and a little girl of ten. In the morning we will start down the San Juan by boat to Lee's Ferry.

We are not pioneers, explorers, or even adventurers, but simply backroads tourists who have put ourselves in the hands of Norman Nevills, probably the best-known river boatman in the world. Norman has been down the full length of the Green and Colorado more than once; he has run the Grand Canyon more times than any man alive or dead, and will run it again this summer. He has run the Salmon and the Snake in Idaho, and he nurses a secret dream of some day running the Brahmaputra, in India. He is like a broncobuster who cannot bear to leave any horse unriden. The trip he will take us on starting tomorrow is a milk run for Norman; he has made it two dozen times. But as he gives us a genial briefing with pictures, it does not look like any milk run to us. Even if it isn't danger-

ous, even if a spry old lady and Norman's ten-year-old daughter can go along, it looks like excitement and it looks like fun. And even the milk run has been made by only a few hundred people at most.

At Mexican Hat the canyon walls are low, but they rise rapidly downstream. When we gather on the beach after breakfast we see the river bowling along, gray-brown with silt, its middle marcelled with two-foot waves. Yesterday two young men put their homemade boat in the river a little above here to try it out. They managed to struggle ashore at the bridge, but they have decided to take Norman's advice and not attempt the river in that boat. We help them put it back on the roof of their car, and they stand a little disconsolately with the rest of Mexican Hat's slim population as the four square-ended semi-cataract boats of Norman's party shove off. Four of us miss the launching, because we are going overland to the Goosenecks to get pictures as the boats swing into the deep hairpins of the meander. We will join the others about noon at the foot of the Honaker Trail.

One after another the boats pull into swift water, swing sideways to take the waves, and are rushed downstream. They seem to shrink to half their size as soon as they are afloat, and they look tiny and frail as they speed down under the bridge and the cable-hung bucket of the Geological Survey gauging station and disappear around the first bend.

We are at the Goosenecks a good while before the boats, which have to travel sixteen miles in the canyon to reach here. Below us the gray-brown river has sunk itself 1300 feet into the rock in a perfect double hairpin — what geologists call an "entrenched meander." The San Juan used to be a sluggish river running on a level plain, and meandering like any old-age stream. Then a great plateau was slowly lifted across its path, so slowly that the river could cling to its old course and simply dig in. So it still has the crooked course of a slow river, though it is actually the fastest major stream in the United States, with a gradient of almost eight feet to the mile. Just for comparison, the Mississippi's gradient is eight *inches* to the mile; that of the Colorado in the Grand Canyon, the most furious water on the continent, is 7.56 feet to the mile. The San Juan below us is not furious, but it is undeniably fast; we can see the speed of it in the glasses, looking down on the throat of the middle bend, where the canyon comes within a hundred yards of cutting through the ridge before it turns and makes a three-mile loop westward, to come back barely a stone's throw from where it started.

For nearly an hour we sit on the hot, barren rim with the towers of Monument Valley — Agathla's Needle and the spiry monuments on the Utah side — breaking the southern horizon. Then the first tiny boat comes in sight down below, and we hear Norm's "river voice" bellowing. We bellow back, though we know the river noise will prevent our

being heard. The four white twigs rotate in almost military formation through a little rapid and disappear under the wall at the turn. Then they emerge again going away from us, on their way around the tedious three-mile hairpin. After a wait, here they come again. Through the glasses I can see them buck and leap in the waves, and I see a combing wave break clear over the bow of the first boat where Mary sits. I can almost see the expression on her face, and I envy her the coolness of that ducking.

The four of us on the rim are all of one mind: pictures or no pictures, we want to get down and get in on the fun. As soon as the last boat has disappeared we pile in the truck and are taken by a wretched mesa-top trail out to another part of the rim, where a rock cairn marks the top of the Honaker Trail. From here it is 1300 feet to the river; the way we have to walk, it is three miles.

2

THE Honaker Trail has been specially recommended to me by Norm because I am gathering material for a biography of John Wesley Powell, the first navigator of the Colorado. This trail, Norm says, will show me what it means to try to climb out of one of these canyons in case of shipwreck or loss of supplies. It shows me that, certainly, switching along the outcropping ledges, sliding down shaly talus full of fossils, going far out of its way to find a way down to the next ledge. It shows me also, if I needed to be shown, what lengths men will go to for a chance to strike it rich. This trail was built by the Honakers at the turn of the century, and for several years they slaved and sweated trying to get a fortune out of the San Juan gravel bars. Altogether they got about \$1500, perhaps a tenth of what it was worth to build the trail. There is nothing on the trail now but a collared lizard with a canary-yellow collar and a marvelous emerald belly, who obligingly poses for color photographs. He is the one lizard in this country, outside the rare and poisonous Gila monster, who will bite you if you fuss with him.

We meet the boats on a sandbar, and after lunch we get our taste of river travel. The river falls two hundred feet in the next twenty-three miles, shooting us through the Honaker Point, Eyemo, John's Canyon, Government, and Slickhorn Rapids, all of them small, with a fall of about four feet apiece, but all exciting enough to amateurs, and good for enough wettings to cool us off.

There is a feeling of continuous rapids on the San Juan, not only because the current boosts us along at an average speed of seven miles an hour but because of the river's peculiar and characteristic "sand waves." These are formed by the piling up of waves of sand on the bottom, which as they accumulate start a series of water waves moving slowly upstream against the current. The waves

appear quite suddenly, move upstream growing deeper and more violent, and crest with a roaring noise for a minute or two before they disappear. At this stage of water they average three feet in height, though occasionally we catch one four or even five feet high. They have been measured up to six. Even in their middle sizes, they toss and pound a boat spectacularly, especially if taken head on. Norm takes them the easy way, sideways, and they afford endless fun with their rocking-horse pitching and the occasional boatload of water they dump on us if we hit them combing.

We are wet and dry all day. At the foot of Slickhorn Rapid, where we pull in to camp after a day's run of forty miles, Paul, our aviation engineer, caps the day by falling off into the rapid's tail wave, clothes, camera, and all. Our camp is among willows and tamarisks on the bar — the tamarisks that not too many years ago were imported from India to combat erosion in desert washes and have now been blown and spread by birds through every gulch in the Southwest. After dinner (steak) all the ladies go off with Norm to be initiated into the order of Driftwood Burners. They build piles of kindling all around an immense tangled pile of driftwood at least an acre in extent, and at a signal touch them off. Within minutes the inferno drives us clear to the water's edge. The hot glow creeps up the cliffs, gradually revealing the rims a quarter mile above; it throws leaping red light up Slickhorn Gulch and touches the abandoned oil rig below the toilsome trail where prospectors at the turn of the century fought their way down here to drill among the oil seeps.

Norm tells us stories of the river, Powell, the ill-fated Brown-Stanton expedition, while the flames eat into the driftwood and the whole gorge glows with red light. Full of energy as a grasshopper, he leads an impromptu Squaw Dance as close to the fire as skin will stand it, and then abruptly heads for bed. The party breaks up and follows him. Hours afterward I wake in the night and feel at two hundred yards the heat of the embers, and see the steady glow on the cliffs. It is pleasant to think that so big and satisfactory a bonfire has only good results: there is no danger from it, and it helps keep Lake Mead from filling up with drift and debris. Through the night the Big Dipper moves down the slot until its handle rests on the rim where the canyon curves left below camp. At the other end of the reach the moon is coming up, shining pale silver on Slickhorn Rapid.

Kent Frost, the boatman-cook, beats on his frying pan at 5.30. During breakfast the sun touches the rims and begins to creep down, but it still has not reached the water when we stop, after an hour's run, to get pictures at the mouth of Grand Gulch. In this red-walled wash, which caused enormous trouble to the Mormon pioneers coming across from Hole-in-the-Rock in 1880, the archaeologist Prudden

first clearly isolated the Basket Maker culture as separate from and earlier than the Pueblo. It has, we know, considerable ruins, but we do not stop to explore. Between walls that rise sheer from the water, but lessen in height downstream, we run down to the open valley called Paiute Farms, beyond the quicksand-sown ford known as Clay Hills Crossing. Here the river spreads out like the Platte over a channel half a mile wide. We hunt cautiously for channels, and several times we go overboard to push. The second boat grounds so definitively that we do not see it again until just before we stop for the night. But in this open stretch we see the only human beings we are to see, besides ourselves, between Mexican Hat and Lee's Ferry. They are four Navajos tending sheep among the tamarisks on the reservation side of the river. On the north bank Norm shows us the bar where he crash-landed his Piper Cub last February and was marooned for two days before another plane located him.

All through the shallows, in a blazing hot afternoon, we cool ourselves off by going overboard to tow or swim behind the boat. Even here on the flats the current is much too strong to swim against; it can barely be walked against. At noon Mary discovered that she could sit down in the shallow water and be pushed along like a kiddy car. But it is a little disconcerting to go overboard with a yell in sand waves four feet high, with the boat standing on its beam-ends, and find the water only knee-deep. We spend half our time throwing each other overboard until the canyon walls begin to narrow again and the river gathers itself.

3

THE canyon of the San Juan is geologically a highly instructive place. In any part of this country one learns to recognize the rock strata and know their profiles and coloring and the peculiarities of their bedding and weathering as one knows the faces of his friends. The San Juan gives us a one-way tour of all the strata we have ever known before, but with characteristic perversity starts in the oldest and flows downward into the highest and youngest.

The gray Hermosa and Rico formations in which we started form terraced cliffs with banded horizontal ledges of harder strata. Below the Honaker Trail these beds disappear under the covering layer of the Cedar Mesa sandstone, red and massive, which forms sheer cliffs like those under which we slept last night. At Clay Hills Crossing and along through Paiute Farms we meet the gray-blue Chinle, which breaks down into badlands slopes, and the thin-bedded red-brown Organrock, which in exposed faces erodes into irregular columns and statuary. And finally these are overtaken by the two most impressive layers of all, the Wingate and Navajo sandstones, both very massive and both very beautiful.

The Wingate, which crops out in bold cliffs clear down into New Mexico, is rich red. It forms marvelously sheer cliffs, straight and hewn as the wall of a building, which often rise straight from the water, though where we first meet this stratum it shows talus slopes of great blocks that cover the Chinle and Organrock underneath. The great planes of cliffs are filigreed with delicate tracery and stained with the shiny, black-brown "desert varnish." We float between great blackboards scrawled with the doodlings of giant children. Once we put in to replenish our water at Nevills Canyon, an alcove full of snake-grass and cane and with a clear sweet spring. The hot run through Paiute Farms has emptied our canteens, and though most of us have sampled river water "just to see what water with real *body* to it tastes like," we prefer our drink without quite so much grit.

As we drift on we see, above the cloven front of the Wingate cliffs, the domes and "baldheads" of the salmon-colored Navajo sandstone which forms the roof of the world here. As the Wingate is a cliff-forming, the Navajo is an arch-forming member. High in the walls amphitheaters a quarter of a mile across open up. Their bottoms are green and lush, and high across their upward curve, just below where the arching roofs begin to overhang, there is a level line of seepage at a joint in the rock. From the seepine, water-stain and fringes of maidenhair fern make a scalloped necklace of green and black and white against the salmon-colored wall.

All around the Great Bend we are in the Wingate capped by Navajo, and caves and alcoves and arched windows appear high in the upper wall, with blackboard cliffs below. At one point where the current sweeps close under an overhanging wall, we catch a glimpse of crosshatched petroglyphs. Across the river from here, on his last trip down, Norm surprised a mountain lion at the water's edge.

4

THIS second night there is no fire or squaw dance. We have run forty-nine miles and pushed and swum, and we hit the sleeping bags early in a camp among great boulders covered with petroglyphic animals and symbols. The last thing I see as I roll in is Annie and Joan, the oldest and the youngest, braiding each other's hair for bed. The first thing I see in the morning is Al, the movie cameraman, somewhat agitatedly shaking two scorpions out of his sleeping bag.

In quick succession this morning we shoot Express Train and Paiute Rapids, both pleasantly exciting, but nothing alarming the way Norm runs them. He is at once so careful and so nonchalant that he makes even bad water look easy. I have tried my hand at the oars several times by now, and I know enough to discount Norm when he says that

running these rivers depends 90 per cent on the boats, 5 per cent on luck, and 5 per cent on skill. There is much more skill in it than that, though the boats are amazing — clumsy and hard to row, wide in the beam and square at both ends, but they ride rapids like ducks on a pond.

Where the river swings in another northward bend, Norm takes Al up a cliff and over the ridge so he can get pictures of us coming around. For two or three miles I am the boatman, and without Norm in the boat to point out rocks I am a little edgy as I steer down through the riffles around the bend, trying to keep facing my danger but not quite sure what single rock or cliff is most dangerous. We are to land on a short bar above a big rock, and I pull into the eddy with great brilliance, making the tricky landing so professionally that I am goofily proud of myself and eager to be of assistance to lesser men. George is coming in too low down, obviously bound for a collision with the big rock. I jump overboard to grab his line, and disappear. In the scouring eddy the water is six feet instead of six inches deep. As I come up I hear cheers from the cliff, and see Al and Norm waving. In my first piece of movie acting I have stolen the scene.

Being already sodden, I am the natural goat for a rigged quicksand sequence. I am to step off into a patch of quicksand and be rescued in the nick of time. I step off all right, and the quicksand sucks me in all right, and the ropes and rescuers come flying and I am pulled out all right, but George, one of the boatmen, who used to be an all-conference half-back at Brigham Young, forgets in his enthusiasm that I am locked in to the waist and that my legs bend only one way. From this time until the end of the trip I walk with a cane, but the service we have rendered to cinematographic art gives us all a deep satisfaction.

Now the next-to-worst rapid on the San Juan, Syncline, where the boats are lightened and where some of the passengers have to walk around. Mary and I get to ride it down, thanks to Powell, but it is disappointingly tame, and we think Norman guilty of building up these riffles to something worse than they are. But at Thirteen-Foot Rapid, further along, we see what he means by white water. All the boatmen call this one nasty to run because of its structure, though it is not in a class with the bad ones on the Colorado and Green, with Lodore and Disaster Falls and Badger Creek and the Sockdologer.

Norm wants to stunt this one for the camera. Again thanks to Powell, I get to go along. We row out into the broken rock-filled channel and all in an instant the current grabs us. I have had the oars in my hands enough to know how this would feel if I were rowing. But Norm half stands, watching the white water ahead, picking his way between rocks, driving stern-first toward the end of the chute where the water roars up on a great rock and then falls

away to the left in a white cascade. A push with one oar, a pull with the other, a little tense adjustment, a quick pull away, a swing back to duck a water-covered rock, and we drive into the roar of the rapids. Norm has mentioned the express-train, earth-shaking thunder of bad water; we almost get it here. We are deliberately bow-light for the stunting, and at the last minute Norm swings so that our bow climbs the big rock and then falls left down what seems ten sheer feet into a boiling hole, shipping a little water and a lot of spray, and bouncing down into the diminishing tail waves.

The other boats are run through one at a time, two of them smacking solidly into a rock in the deep hole at the rapid's foot, but bouncing off unharmed. We stop for lunch a little below, in Redbud Canyon where there is a sweet-water spring, and after lunch Al and Alma and I go on ahead with Kent, rowing hard to get out in front of the others so we can shoot pictures at the junction with the Colorado.

The last few miles of the San Juan canyon are deep and narrow, beautifully sheer in the Navajo sandstone; the Wingate has slid underneath us. At the junction we float out into a wide, deep, quiet river, moving fast but not as fast as the San Juan, that rounds into a turn to the west. When we land and climb the cliff across the Colorado we can look up Glen Canyon between the salmon-pink walls to a high butte; on every side, across on Wilson's Mesa between the rivers and north and south of us on both sides, the Navajo sandstone is eroded in knobs and domes. Back of us is the knife-edged profile of the Kaiparowits Plateau, high and gloomy, locally called Wild Horse Mesa; and to the south the cool, gray-green mound of Navajo Mountain overlooking the meeting place of the rivers. We are not explorers or pioneers, but we feel a little like explorers here. Not too many people have visited this spot. The distances in every direction are barren of man, the great mountain south of us is a holy place where no Navajo will be caught after dark, there is no sound on our slickrock ridge except the rustle of a small dry wind.

When we hear Norm's river voice, and photograph the boats stringing out into the big river, and Kent scares the boat party by rolling a tub-sized boulder off the cliff with a heart-stopping roar, we turn our backs on the San Juan. But we do it regretfully. It is a fine, friendly, and very beautiful little river, a marvelous roadway into wonder, and we allow ourselves, in this remote spot, to grow exasperated with the Rivers of America series for not including so colorful a stream. Basket Maker, Pueblo, Navajo, Paiute, Spaniard, Mormon, gold-seeker, and oil prospector have left their scratches on its walls and their quickly erased footprints at its few passable fords. Curiously, the Indian has changed this river more than the white man. There is every evidence that in Pueblo times the San Juan

country supported a larger population than it does now, and that the town-dwelling Indians grew gardens where now there are barren boulder-strewn washes. With the coming of the herdsman tribes the desert cover was gradually grazed off, the floods grew more disastrous, and the land that used to line the canyons went down the river.

5

IN Glen Canyon we are again in the stream of history, on a main road. Near the upper end, at Hole-in-the-Rock, the Mormon pioneers of the San Juan country blasted their way down the cliffs and struggled across on their way to Bluff and the completion of the most appalling wagon trip ever taken anywhere. Down below us, at Padre Creek, Father Escalante lowered his supplies over the wall and swam his mules across to the south bank on his adventurous way back to Santa Fe in 1776. This part of the Colorado canyon has been a blessed interlude of rest for every river expedition since Powell's first one in 1869. In all the miles of Glen Canyon there is not a rapid, hardly a rock, nothing more dangerous than whirlpools and sucks. Regular boat trips come down from Hite and up from Lee's Ferry through scenery that is at once awesome and charming. The sheer cliffs of Navajo sandstone, stained in vertical stripes like a roman-striped ribbon and intricately cross-bedded and etched, lift straight out of the great river. This is the same stone, though here pinker in color, that forms the domes and thrones and temples of Zion and the Capitol Reef. It is surely the handsomest of all the rock strata in this country. The pockets and alcoves and glens and caves which irregular erosion has worn in the walls are lined with incredible greenery, redbud and tamarisk and willow and the hanging delicacy of maidenhair around springs and seeps. Our real voyaging stopped with the San Juan; from here on we loaf, pulling ashore to explore something every mile or two.

Our first camp in Glen Canyon, just below the junction, is almost unimaginably beautiful — a sandstone ledge below two arched caves, with clean cliffs soaring up behind and a long green sandbar across the river. Just below us is the masked entrance of Hidden Passage Canyon, which at sunup glows softly red, its outthrust masking wall throwing a strong shadow against the cliff. Behind this masking wall is the kind of canyon that is almost commonplace here, but that anywhere else would be a wonder. Music Temple, Hidden Passage, Mystery Canyon, Twilight Canyon, Forbidden Canyon, Labyrinth Canyon, we explore a dozen, and there are dozens that we pass by. The most innocent opening, apparently a mere keyhole of an alcove, may be the door to a gorge a quarter of a mile deep and heaven knows how long, sometimes rods wide, sometimes less than a yard. Often the water has cut

down irregularly, so that the walls waver and overhang and cut off the sky. Sometimes one has to ascend wading waist-deep in rock-floored pools; sometimes the canyon will jump suddenly up narrow waterfalls, generally dry at this season, or seeping a thin wetness down the discolored rock.

Follow one of these canyons in far enough, and it usually ends either at a fall or in one of the echoing caves and chambers the Navajo sandstone is fond of forming. Music Temple, for instance, is a domed chamber five hundred feet long and two hundred high, with a little eavespout of a creek coming out of a slot in the roof and dropping into a clear pool. Powell, who camped here on both of his river expeditions, and whose men left their names and initials carved into a rock face here, described the creek-slot as a skylight. It is actually more like the slot in an observatory roof. The shadows in a chamber like this, the patterns of light and shadow, are miraculous and utterly unphotographable, and the walls re-echo the slightest sound.

Mystery Canyon ends in the same sort of domed cave, with an even larger pool. Echo Cave Camp, maintained by Rainbow Lodge just above the Rainbow Bridge, is another such chamber. The walls of Twilight Canyon are undercut, first on one side and then on the other, with huge caves, one so immense that the whole Hollywood Bowl could be set back into it, and so perfect acoustically that six and seven word echoes pursue us as we walk through. Most bizarre of all the canyons, the spookiest concession in this rock fun-house, is Labyrinth Canyon, which narrows down to less than two feet, and whose walls waver and twist so that anyone groping up this dark, crooked, nightmare cranny in the deep rock has to bend over and twist his body sideways to get through. Floor and walls are pocked with perfectly round pockets like nests, full of the pebbles and rocks that have scoured them. Though we cannot see the sky, we know that the walls go up several hundred feet, and though we scramble back in at least a mile and a half, scaling one dry waterfall, we see no sign of an end. The thought of what it would be like to be caught in here in a rain gives us the fantods, and we come out fast.

The high water tempts us into a number of can-

yons, for overnight the river has risen from what Norm estimated at 40,000 second-feet to what he is sure is over 60,000, and the doorways of many canyons are flooded so that we can row in as into fjords, winding in and out and once poling through a watery tunnel formed by a fallen slab. Every sandbar is green with tamarisk and redbud; wherever there is an accumulation of soil, cottonwoods have taken hold, to hang on until the next big flood scours the channel clean and the cycle starts over.

Many years ago, reading Powell's account of his explorations, I got the notion that I wanted to come down into Glen Canyon and hole up in an alcove where there was water and a little soil. "Nine bean rows would I have there, and a hive for the honey bee. . . ." Now as I think of what we are likely to see in the papers when we end this river trip in a day or two, I suggest to Norm that I'd still like to hide out here for a while. He is full of enthusiasm at once; he will lend me a boat and help me get in supplies, either by river or by plane. I can sit in my green alcove and watch the river whirl by and write a book.

He doesn't know how close he is to being taken up. I reflect on those scientific friends of mine at M.I.T. and Harvard who are quite seriously stocking their Vermont farms against Armageddon, and it is a temptation to imagine that there might be sanctuary in this remote and beautiful canyon. But that lasts only thirty seconds. Out in the flood-swollen stream, snags and logs and drift go by, rocking in the swift water, circling with corpse-like dignity in eddies and whirlpools, and as we watch we see a dead deer or sheep, its four stiff hooves in the air, go floating by in mid-river. We abandon the notion of sanctuary: even here, the world would drive its dead sheep and driftwood by the door.

But we can forget that at least another day, until we hit Lee's Ferry. At the mouth of Forbidden Canyon, after we return from the fourteen-mile hike to the Rainbow Bridge and back, we discover that the catfish will bite on anything or nothing, they will rise and gobble cigarette butts, or eat empty hooks as fast as we can drop them in. This is the way things were when the world was young; we had better enjoy them while we can.

Tension

In a world gripped by mistrust, insecurity, and selfishness, the self-doubt of the individual looms larger than ever. What, we ask ourselves, is a normal reaction?

And in increasing numbers we turn to psychiatry for its healing advice. DR. WILLIAM C. MENNINGER, President-elect of the American Psychiatric Association, is General Secretary of the Menninger Foundation. At the Atlantic's urging he addresses himself to significant current objectives of the psychiatric profession.

PSYCHIATRY TODAY

by WILLIAM C. MENNINGER

PSYCHIATRY is in a state of flux. It is becoming involved in many aspects of life that were considered foreign to it even a few years ago, and public resistance has changed to public demand for more and more psychiatric help. It is commonplace now for intelligent people to consult a psychiatrist about family or personal problems, long before they reach a stage of acute mental distress. The public responds immediately to each new radio program about psychiatry and to every item in the barrage of articles (some fine, some very poor) which appear in the daily press and the popular magazines. One passing reference in a syndicated article resulted in more than a thousand letters to the agency it mentioned, begging for answers to personal problems.

Mental illness was explained as witchcraft for so long that patients and their relatives are still subject to a deep-seated fear and horror of mental illness and to shame at its discovery. In common parlance the mind and the body are discussed as if they were two distinct and unrelated entities. The practice of psychiatry is still handicapped by the tendency to misjudge and misinterpret unusual human behavior instead of appreciating that that behavior may be evidence of maladjustment. This applies equally to criticizing the soldier who breaks down in combat, the clerk who comes late to work, the boss who is hyper-irritable, or the youngster who steals. Until education has succeeded in overcoming emotional prejudice the practice of psychiatry will continue to face these handicaps to its most effective utilization.

Psychiatry as a body of knowledge has grown tremendously. The theories and findings in psychoanalytic psychiatry have contributed a dynamic concept of the personality structure and physiology. The concept of the unconscious as a major portion of every personality, from which the powerful primitive energy drives spring, has become a fundamental consideration in understanding and interpreting all types of behavior. The automatic mental machinery, called defense mechanisms, which

permits us to express the primitive energy drives, sometimes in healthy ways, sometimes as symptoms, gives an understandable basis for human behavior. It has presented conclusive evidence of the varied effects of certain kinds of training and experience in infancy and childhood. On the basis of such knowledge, psychiatrists can now postulate the preventive efficacy of some few principles that underlie human relationships. All these and many other new and helpful findings have increased our understanding of personality.

From concern with the individual as a biological unit psychiatry has progressed to a consideration of him as a social unit. More than any other branch of medicine, psychiatry has to be interested in the environment in which a person functions, as well as in the person himself. It has to accept as basic the fact that the emotional difficulties of any one person always involve other people. Consequently, it is not merely a matter of studying the blood or the X-ray or the physical pathology of the person. It involves investigation into the environment in which he lives, his family, his friends, his job. Psychiatry has become a social science as well as a medical science.

There are many specific areas in which psychiatry as a science has made conspicuous progress in addition to its understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the personality. It is gradually but definitely improving and clarifying its concepts of specific mental illnesses and its terminology for use in diagnosis.

New methods of treatment

In regard to treatment methods, psychiatry has made enormous gains. The trend has been toward intensification and consequent shortening of treatment, and toward discovery of new methods.

The method known as "psychotherapy" is the process of giving psychological understanding to the patient through his discussion of his problems with a physician who then interprets their meaning

and suggests or supports the patient's solution of them. This technique has received special study and improvement. There likewise have been improvements in physical treatment measures and in neurosurgery as applied to psychiatric patients. There is a keener recognition by both laymen and psychiatrists that early treatment can be much more effective than that which is delayed until the illness has become acute.

One of the most valuable gains in the treatment of hospitalized patients has been the wider use of ancillary treatment methods that are classified as occupation, education, and recreation. There has been considerable progress in making the prescription of all these different therapies specific for each individual patient. Major developments have been made in group therapy — treating several patients at one time. Where this is done chiefly through the medium of group discussion, it is known as group psychotherapy. Special values are being found in music, art, and drama as adjunctive treatment. No longer is psychiatric treatment merely a matter of custody, of keeping the patient busy or of giving him superficial encouragement through platitudes.

Another pertinent fact is the shift in type of work. In 1920, 76 per cent of the psychiatrists were devoting their full efforts to the care of patients in state and Federal institutions. In 1946, this number had fallen to 62 per cent, reflecting the fact that nearly 40 per cent are now in private practice or working in areas other than strictly mental institutions. Psychiatry has moved out of the massive mental institutions where only those individuals with the more severe types of mental illness are cared for. It has moved into many general hospitals, outpatient clinics, private office consultations and practice. One can speculate upon the possible far-reaching significance of this shift: namely, the eventual maintenance at an even level of the total number of persons who must reside in our mental hospitals at any one time. Theoretically, it could even decrease that number.

At least this was the experience in the Army. At the beginning of the war, psychiatrists were placed only in hospitals. Since anyone unable to go on duty was sent to the hospital, patients were admitted who in civilian life would not have gone to a hospital and perhaps not even consulted a physician. Once admitted to an Army hospital, too many psychiatric patients were entirely unable to return to active duty. By the end of the second year of the war we had psychiatrists in the field, in mental hygiene clinics where, for every patient whom they had to refer to the hospital, they saw nine men who remained on duty.

The psychiatric team

The "team concept" in the practice of psychiatry has been developed extensively within the last five years. For the most satisfactory outpatient psychi-

atric practice, a team is required consisting of psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, and psychiatric social worker. If the patient is hospitalized, the team is enlarged to include the psychiatric nurse and the psychiatric therapist who carries on occupational, recreational, and educational activities. This system permits a more comprehensive treatment program than that in which treatment is limited to interviews with the patient.

This concept of relationships in the practice of psychiatry is not new. Psychiatric social workers have assisted psychiatrists for thirty years. Clinical psychologists have made contributions in psychological testing techniques for even a longer period. But until recently the staffs of only a very few psychiatric institutions, either hospital or clinic, have functioned on the team basis.

Like many other developments, the military experience gave this arrangement a major boost through making it, not without difficulty, "standard operating procedure" in every military hospital and clinic. The majority of our psychiatrists who had never worked with social workers or clinical psychologists learned how to make the most of their services. Most of our clinical psychologists who had never worked in a hospital or directly on a psychiatric team learned to work in that relationship. The net result has been a definite improvement in the practice of psychiatry, civilian as well as military.

Psychiatrists in the field

From their comparative isolation, psychiatrists have emerged from their hospitals and their offices to serve the community in various ways. They have ventured into the field of criminology and penology. At least ten of our adult criminal courts now have either a full- or part-time psychiatrist to aid the judge in his decisions about criminals. The great majority of our more progressive juvenile courts have enlisted the full- or part-time aid of the psychiatrist and clinical psychologist and social worker. All our Federal penal institutions have psychiatrists in so far as such professional personnel can be obtained. Even a few of our state penal institutions avail themselves of psychiatric advice and counsel.

Psychiatry has made some beginning steps into the area of public health. For many years there has been a mental hygiene division in the United States Public Health Service. Through its initiative and under its leadership, Congress passed the National Mental Health Act last year. It undoubtedly will be a major impetus to the improvement of national mental health through the provision of funds for state and community psychiatric projects — outpatient clinics and improvements in our state hospital practice. Under this act, grants have already been made for psychiatric research and for the improvement of the educational program in medical schools and other psychiatric training centers. The

act needs to be extended to provide funds for physical facilities for treatment and research and training, currently one of the chief bottlenecks in the progress of psychiatry.

A psychiatrist is a member of the Department of Health in five of our states. Seven other states have a mental hygiene program under some special unit or division of their government. In an additional five, a psychiatrist functions under the Department of Public Welfare. In most of these state public health programs for psychiatry, a chief responsibility has been the state hospital system. In some, outpatient clinics have been created. In a few, some effort has been made in the development of state-wide programs of mental hygiene.

Psychiatry has made some excursions, uncertain and totally inadequate, into other everyday problems to which potentially it can contribute. Specifically, several industries have taken on full-time psychiatrists to help with their personnel problems. At least thirty of our universities or colleges have a psychiatrist who acts as a mental hygiene counselor. An increasing number of universities and colleges are providing courses in mental hygiene for their students.

Psychiatry has made a small contribution to the field of academic education. In this instance, much of the progress has been made because informed educators have sought the help of psychiatric knowledge as it relates to teaching procedures. Many teacher training colleges now offer courses in child development, emotional as well as physical.

Coöperating with the medical man

The status of psychiatry in its relation to medicine is one of a much closer coöperation than even ten years ago. Although psychiatry was born in, and for years remained confined to, the isolated asylums and state hospitals, it now has become a functioning unit in many of our general medical and surgical hospitals. Often psychiatric patients are given beds on general medical services; in many hospitals there is at least one special psychiatric ward, and there is usually a section in the outpatient clinic which is devoted to the treatment of psychiatric patients. Psychiatrists are increasingly included in group-practice clinics.

In the Army and Navy during the war, doctors of all specialties found themselves working together closely; psychiatric consultations were used extensively on medical and surgical wards. The association of these physicians was healthy and beneficial not only to psychiatry but to the other branches of medicine.

This association in military experience has carried over in some degree into civilian life. Through the vision and determination of Dr. Paul Hawley, director of the medical services for the Veterans Administration, and Dr. Daniel Blain, the inclusion of psychiatry in the general hospitals has been adopted

as the standard organization for all the Veterans Administration hospitals. In several university hospitals psychiatry is practiced and taught not in a psychiatric pavilion but on a general medical ward. At the last annual meeting of the American College of Physicians, the leading group of internists in this country, a half-day discussion was devoted to emotional factors in illness. That same organization is now sponsoring short post-graduate courses in psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine for any of its members who wish to attend.

Psychiatrists, perhaps more than anyone else, believe that a great percentage of the emotional problems seen in medical and surgical cases should be treated by the physician in charge of the case regardless of his major specialty. Unfortunately, too few physicians without psychiatric training have an adequate understanding of the emotional factors in illness. Nonetheless, the trend towards considering physical symptoms as evidence of problems that are disturbing an individual and contributing to his illness, instead of merely as evidence of disease, is encouraging to psychiatrists as well as to many other physicians.

Problems in psychiatry

In spite of distinct and important changes during the last twenty-five years in the status of psychiatry, every alert psychiatrist is aware of many vital needs which require survey, intensive study, and early action. It is essential that the public, so eager to take advantage of the benefits of psychiatry, should know of the deterrents to greater and faster progress.

By all odds, the present greatest need is for *trained personnel*. This applies particularly to psychiatrists but also to clinical psychologists, psychiatric social workers, psychiatric nurses, and therapists in the areas of occupation, recreation, and education who know how to apply these treatments to psychiatric patients. Of the approximately 4300 members of the American Psychiatric Association, a considerable number are older men who for many years have been concerned chiefly with administrative work. Many others are "associate" members — persons who have had a year of experience or training in psychiatry and can supply good references. This has seemed a wise practice in order to encourage young physicians to affiliate. But many of these men cannot be rated as seasoned, experienced psychiatrists.

In contrast to this comparatively small number of psychiatrists with varying degrees of experience and time for clinical practice, it is conservatively estimated that the country needs between ten and fifteen thousand well-trained psychiatrists at the present time.

Dr. Hawley recently indicated that he could use all the first-class psychiatrists now available in the United States to meet current demands within the Veterans Administration alone. Several of our

states have no psychiatrists within their borders except those in the state hospital. It is equally serious that we have, roughly speaking, only about one tenth of our current personnel needs in clinical psychology and psychiatric social work, and less than this in psychiatric nursing. If such personnel were available in sufficient numbers, they could extend the services of psychiatrists considerably.

A natural question follows: Why is there such a shortage of psychiatrists? This isn't an easy question to answer. One reason for the serious lag between need and availability is that adequate training in psychiatry requires a minimum of from five to seven years following medical school graduation. First, the graduate must serve one to two years of general medical internship in a hospital, like all doctors. This is followed by three years' residency in psychiatry. Two additional years of practice are then required before a doctor is even eligible to take the examination for certification in this specialty. If he wishes to take psychoanalytic training — and a great majority of the younger men are seeking this — he must add two to three more years to his medical education. With the long training period following medical school, psychiatrists in numbers to meet the need cannot be supplied for some time.

The problem is complicated further because of the relatively few educational institutions where an adequate training is provided. There are approximately 1200 openings for residency training in psychiatry, but the training given in many of these is woefully inadequate, despite their presumably approved status.

Undoubtedly the most important stimulus to the training of psychiatrists has been received through the superb leadership in the Veterans Administration. Not only did Dr. Hawley and his associates tie the backward Veterans Hospitals to medical schools to ensure better treatment of all veteran patients: in many branches of medicine, resident training opportunities were established. Through this plan, the Veterans Administration established nearly five times as many residencies in psychiatry in its hospitals as had existed previously in all university medical school hospitals combined. Currently between four and five hundred psychiatric residencies are provided by the Veterans Administration.

Only recently have the majority of the alert leaders in medicine accepted the fact that there is an emotional component in every illness. Many of them now believe that in probably 50 per cent of all cases, emotional factors are the major cause of the illness. Because of the widespread lack of appreciation of its value, the teaching of psychiatry has comprised on the average only 3 to 4 per cent of the total number of hours in the four years of the medical course. There are still a number of medical schools which do not even have a department of psychiatry. Such material as is covered in this subject is pre-

sented by part-time teachers attached to the department of medicine. Probably less than half of our medical schools have a full-time psychiatrist on the faculty. In contrast, many have from two or three to as many as ten full-time teachers in their departments of medicine and surgery. The result is that many of the students graduating from our seventy-odd medical schools this year will not have a sound orientation in the field of psychiatry.

Along with a discussion of these darker aspects of the teaching of psychiatry in medical schools, it is worth while to point out a few of the bright spots. Within the current year at least five more medical schools will organize and develop a department of psychiatry with a full-time psychiatrist in charge. Many other departments will be strengthened. This progress was made possible through Federal grants from the United States Public Health Service. At the moment there is only one medical school which has an organized training course in psychoanalysis, although an increasing number have included *analytically trained psychiatrists on their teaching staffs* who offer lecture courses dealing with this subject. With the exception of the three-year course given at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, psychiatrists must still go elsewhere than to medical schools for psychoanalytic training.

The need for research

The second major area in psychiatry that needs attention, and needs it badly, is that of *tested knowledge*. This means research. We need research into many aspects of human behavior. We need to know more about the normal individual; the causes of his malfunction; the chemical, the physical, the psychological nature of many of the mental afflictions from which he suffers. Above all, we need extensive research in the area of treatment. A pressing problem is how treatment can be given more intensively in order to enable more people to benefit from limited numbers of psychiatrists and their co-workers, thus also reducing the cost to the patient. At present most psychiatrists are functioning as clinicians — that is, they spend their time examining and treating patients. If they carry on research it has to be on their "own time" whenever they can steal it from an otherwise overburdened workday.

Another way of representing the inadequacy of research in psychiatry is to point out that for every case of poliomyelitis, approximately a hundred dollars is invested in research in that disease. For every case of mental illness, twenty-five cents is invested in research.

Psychiatric research, like most medical research, has been carried on through grants for specific projects. These grants, from foundations, are to be used within a specified length of time. The research worker naturally wonders whether he can secure a renewal of his grant to complete his work, or whether

he will be able to obtain another grant for some new project. He lives from grant to grant.

One cannot separate the lack of funds from the lack of personnel, for if funds sufficient to ensure tenure were available, many more young men might be attracted to the field of psychiatric research. Psychiatrists have not played upon the public sympathy, nor have they had the wide support of Christmas seals or the March of Dimes. The prevention of suicide and neurotic ineffectiveness has not fired public interest to the point of supporting research along those lines. Nor has the tax dollar even begun to meet the mental health needs.

Wanted: good mental hospitals

A direct consequence is the serious state of affairs in our mental hospitals. The failure to care for and properly treat mental patients is a very black blot on the escutcheon of our social order. This is not the fault of psychiatry. It has resulted from the public refusal to be concerned with the patients in these institutions or to bother with checking on the adequacy of their care and treatment. To a considerable degree society has ostracized these institutions, their patients, and very frequently their physicians. Such a situation left the physician as the sole champion of his forgotten charges. He was hard pressed even to find the time to do his job; certainly he had — and still has — no time for public education or legislative lobbying.

Our state hospitals are badly overcrowded and they are critically understaffed. The staff in many of them have had little or no training, for the salary level in many states is not attractive to well-qualified men and women. This applies not only to the physicians but to the entire personnel who work with the patients. Most institutions housing mental patients are hospitals in name only. The few excellent state hospitals can be counted on the fingers of the two hands.

To some degree, the inadequacy of most state hospitals is a matter of simple mathematics. In round figures, about 2700 physicians care for 625,000 patients — which means an average of one doctor for every 233 patients in mental hospitals across the United States. In some instances, the ratio is one physician to 1000 patients! It is obvious that one doctor cannot provide treatment, make diagnostic studies, see relatives, write up his case histories and examinations, and carry on his administrative work and the many other minor duties involved in the care of 233 patients. He can hardly be expected even to know them. He has time to deal only with emergencies.

In many fields of medicine and surgery, the diagnosis is often immediately apparent and the treatment instructions or procedures are easily and quickly carried out. This is rarely the case in psychiatry. The most experienced psychiatrists do well if they gain sufficient understanding of a personality

problem in two hours to recommend treatment with conviction and assurance.

In only an infinitesimally small percentage of our state hospitals have the personnel who care directly for the patients received adequate training. In most of them the attendants do not receive enough pay to attract even high school graduates. The direct result of no training and the low grade of aids or attendants is not merely poor care but the frank abuse of patients. Many of our state hospitals have no graduate nurses. Few of them have a psychiatric social worker for even as many as a thousand or two thousand patients. Only the occasional state hospital has a trained clinical psychologist.

The average cost per patient in a general hospital is about \$9.00 a day. In the state mental hospitals across the country it averages \$1.05 per patient per day. The food cost in a general hospital runs from 75 cents to \$1.50 a day. In the state mental hospitals it averages 22 cents a day. It is also news to most people that even though a fourth of the total budget of most states is spent for the care of mental patients, this is on an average only a fourth or even a fifth as much as should be spent.

Current state hospital budgets are not sufficient to provide the patients in most such institutions with proper physical care, to say nothing of treatment. In far too many instances they are actually receiving mistreatment. The commitment laws in many of our states are antique. In one state they are medieval in requiring the patient to go to jail until committed by the court to a mental hospital. Most of the laws treat commitment as if it were entirely a legal rather than fundamentally a medical procedure. A major percentage of the population of many of our state hospitals are senile patients who should be given custodial care apart from younger persons. Part of an active treatment program should be an environment of hope and optimism. All our state institutions are housing many patients who could be cared for on an outpatient basis if clinical facilities were available. Such facilities would save staff, manpower, expense of custody, and lives of patients.

The enforcement of hospital standards is the responsibility of the public and must become its concern. The experts are willing and are ready to investigate specific institutions and make recommendations as to what can be done in order to provide good treatment. Then it is up to the citizens whether state authorities accept the recommendations or some political group blocks action. In the last analysis the full responsibility for the situation in most of our state hospitals lies with the people. If the public *wants* state hospitals which provide proper care and treatment for its ill citizens, it can have them.

Credit belongs to psychiatrists for establishing hospital standards. These standards set forth everything from the floor space per patient to the facilities

needed, from the ratio of patients to various types of personnel, to the daily costs. Consultation and advice are available to any state on request to the United States Public Health Service or the hospital committee of the American Psychiatric Association or to the hospital committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry.

Maintaining mental health

One of the roles of psychiatry that must be greatly expanded is in the field of prevention of mental ill health. Army experience demonstrated that draft selection, diagnosis, and disposition of neuropsychiatric casualties were not the only duties of psychiatrists. We learned that a greater contribution could be made by preventing some of the casualties.

Lessons from the Army experience emphasized three major factors in maintaining mental health. The first, and the most important, was that the quality of leadership contributed to or prevented mental ill health. The second lesson was that the development of positive rational attitudes towards the job to be done — that is, conscious motivation — could be a great aid in the doing of that job. Unquestionably, good motivation was an important factor in maintaining mental health, for poor motivation was followed by an increase in the number of psychiatric casualties. Third, identification with his unit, which permitted a sense of pride, and provided comparative security, satisfaction, and unity of purpose, was extremely important to the mental health of the individual. These elementary factors in the maintenance of the soldier's mental health apply also to individuals in a family, business, community, and nation.

One of the chief aims of preventive psychiatry should be the continued attempt to educate parents and all other leaders to the importance of developing mature persons. The "average" adult, even the "average" child, early learns sufficient information about his physical health to be reasonably informed as to how he should take care of it. He knows some elementary principles about diet, sleep and fresh air, and cleanliness. The chances are that ninety-nine men and women out of one hundred know that they have a heart, and something about it. On the other hand, it is an unusual individual who knows even the simplest principles for keeping in good mental health. Most of that hundred do not know that the unconscious is the most powerful part of the personality; nor do they know its role in the struggle to attain maturity. It seems reasonable to assume that an elementary knowledge of the structure and development of the personality would be helpful to the average person.

In psychiatry, the primary aim of public education should be to provide the "average" man with a better knowledge of the steps to psychological maturity, and of how to fortify and improve his mental health. In participating in such education,

psychiatrists have no intention of making amateur psychiatrists out of laymen any more than does popular education about anatomy make one into a surgeon. They cite facts and figures not as alarmists or sensationalists but as evidence of a need.

The American Psychiatric Association

What are psychiatrists doing about all these areas in which progress is so obviously needed? As an organized group, they are beginning to give more consideration to these problems. Their national organization of psychiatrists is the American Psychiatric Association. For 103 years its annual meetings have given them an opportunity to come together and exchange scientific ideas, a chance to learn from each other. It has a large number of standing committees which interest themselves in various subjects within the field of psychiatry. A few of these have done superb jobs in providing leadership and programs of action. Two other important organizations of psychiatric workers — the American Psychoanalytic Association and the American Orthopsychiatric Association — are also giving leadership in their specific areas of interest.

Another extremely important effort has been the creation of non-profit foundations to promote mental health. For over thirty-five years the National Committee for Mental Hygiene has carried on almost alone a crusade for a better understanding of mental health. It has a long list of achievements to its credit. The National Mental Health Foundation has recently been organized and is already making conspicuous strides in mental health education, particularly as it relates to the problems of the state hospital.

A newer organization is the Psychiatric Foundation, sponsored by the American Psychiatric Association for the purpose of raising funds to finance the program of that organization as well as other worthy psychiatric endeavors. These and other foundations form channels through which money can be directed towards vital accomplishments.

Help for a sick nation

The major task of most psychiatrists is the study and treatment of the individual sick person. Relief of acute distress is their special responsibility. Furthermore, clinical work with individual patients has been and always will be the source of knowledge for the extension of psychiatric efforts into the realm of prevention. The rules for mental hygiene, preventive psychiatry, emerge from observations and study of the sick personality.

Even now there is a sizable body of general principles about mental health which could be applied more widely if it could be interpreted for and distributed to the public. This would require an increasing number of psychiatrists who would take their places in our public health programs to initiate and carry on preventive measures just as that pro-

gram now institutes measures to protect our physical health.

We know that psychiatric illness is the result of the conflict between the personality and its environment. If the personality is, by inheritance or training, defective or weak, either temporarily or permanently, it can be overwhelmed by the demands of the environment. Or if the environment creates severe stress for a long enough period, the integration of even a strong and healthy personality may be broken down. Of one fact we are certain: the world is full of varied stresses, many of which show no sign of diminishing, and others are increasing.

The war cost America 157 million dollars a day for over five years. The effect of war-created strain on human beings is beyond calculation. The pathological outpouring of the aggression and destructiveness of war can well be regarded as a psychosis. The overt outlet of mass emotion in killing which the shooting war provided is over, in at least part of the world. But our present status is definitely not one of convalescence and recovery. Locally, nationally, and internationally, our relationships are marked with tension, mistrust, suspicion, and selfishness. Suffering, physical and emotional, still afflicts a majority of the people in the world. Our advances in physical science as represented by the atomic bomb and television have progressed so much farther than our advances in the social sciences that our very existence is dangerously threatened. We have learned how to eliminate space and annihilate people, but we still lag far behind in learning how to get along with each other even in uncomplicated situations.

During the war the psychiatrist found his job in combat at odds with his civilian experience. Whereas in civilian life he attempted to understand and correct the abnormal reactions of persons to normal situations, in military life he had to understand and modify men's normal reactions to an abnormal situation. One might seriously ask if the condition of the world does not now place many of us in a continuously abnormal situation to which we are reacting normally, even though such behavior by all previous standards appears pathological. In such a turbulent world, one wonders just what a normal reaction is. Can psychiatry contribute any suggestions toward individual and collective ability to stay mentally well under current conditions?

Disintegration of the family

Let us start with the family. It is apparent that major changes have been taking place in the organization and structure of the family. Various statistics can be marshaled as evidence of this. Divorces have increased from approximately 250,000 in 1937 to over 600,000 in 1946. Before the war, approximately 11 million women worked outside of the home; 2.5 million more wanted or needed work. In March, 1944, at the war peak, there were

over 16 million women at work away from home, 7 million of whom were married. At present 44 per cent of our families have no children and an additional 22 per cent have only one child.

In considering these facts, the psychiatrist does not sit in moral judgment on the many individuals concerned. Taking into consideration changes in our method of living, changing mores, economic pressures, educational factors, the psychiatrist regards the statistical facts as symptoms of psychological stress.

Psychiatrists are in agreement that healthy development to emotional adulthood depends very largely upon a childhood home situation which provides affection, good example, and security. Today a great many American families are unable to satisfy these basic needs of their children.

The current status of the family undoubtedly has something to do with the changing relationships between men and women as a result of woman's "emancipation" during the last thirty years. Her greatly increased opportunity for self-expression has also created an increasing number of potential conflicts for her. Magazines have been publishing protests, explanations, apologies, and demands of some women who feel that in spite of the changes in their status they do not derive sufficient satisfaction from their role in society. While the mature personality, man or woman, will find satisfaction in what has to be done and, if necessary, supplement that with self-chosen activity, the unfortunate fact is that many individuals are not emotionally mature. The tragedy is that the frustrated wife and mother will leave her mark on husband and children. The problem is not solely up to the woman to solve. It is a joint responsibility of man and wife.

Promiscuity

Immaturity, either male or female or both, is probably also a major factor in our high divorce rates and what appears to be increasing instability in marriage. It also expresses itself symptomatically in several other major problems: for instance, the marked increase in non-marital sexual relations.

This social sore point, too, is fraught with many influencing factors that are represented in our changing mores and moral standards. It may be related to the increase in emphasis on individualism and decrease in power of group disapproval. There can be no vital statistics on the extent of non-marital sexual relations. We do know that the reports of venereal disease in the continental United States indicated that the number of new cases of gonorrhea (no second exposures reported) practically doubled between 1941 and 1946, from 191,000 to 367,000.

Another one of our serious social problems related to immaturity is alcoholism. It is estimated that this evidence of maladjustment costs America nearly 800 million dollars a year and concerns 2.4 million persons, 85 per cent of whom are men.

Crime

Closely related to the family, which contributes so much to the cause or prevention of mental ill health, is America's problem of crime and delinquency. It is variously estimated that this social ill costs the country between 8 and 10 billion dollars a year. This is more than six times as much as we spend for public education. Our overflowing penitentiaries, reformatories, and jails cost us over 100 million dollars a year to operate.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation reported that the 1.6 million crimes committed in 1946 broke all records for the past decade. This figure shows an increase of 120,000 over the previous year. Approximately 120,000 juveniles passed through the courts in 1945. That the behavior represented in crime and delinquency is evidence of maladjustment is another point on which there would be nearly 100 per cent agreement among psychiatrists. For some years they have maintained that all offenders against society should have the benefit of a psychiatric and a physical examination. Those who are salvable should be treated and socially rehabilitated. Those individuals with permanently distorted personalities should be committed to permanent detention without regard to the nature of their offense.

To these and other problems that are producing great stress and unhappiness for millions of Americans, psychiatry cannot find all the answers. To the solution of many it cannot even make any major contribution. They should be the object of intensive study by coördinated groups of social scientists, educators, religious leaders, statesmen, and many others. It seems reasonable to presume, however, that psychiatrists, those experts who spend their lives attempting to understand why people behave as they do, should be able to offer a major contribution to such study.

Social neuroses

Many of us in this field believe that the so-called social neuroses, which are such real stresses to our patients and our families, and are threats to our nation and world peace, must be carefully and immediately investigated for diagnosis which should lead to intensive treatment.

Number one among all of the social neuroses in America today is the widespread prejudice and discrimination against persons because of race, color, or religion. Bigoted intolerance, the thesis of "white supremacy," anti-Semitic prejudice, discriminatory practices, hostile attitudes towards Catholicism and Protestantism, are all present in varying degrees in every section of the country. Psychiatrists are familiar with these as symptoms in their patients. Therefore, they have an opportunity to learn much about the psychological dynamics and, consequently, the significance of such preju-

dices for the individual. Surely, if they would crystallize their thinking on the subject, they could make constructive suggestions towards the solution of this problem.

Forced unemployment is another major mental health hazard. It is variously estimated that 60 to 80 per cent of unemployed persons manifest definite signs of mental ill health. In a majority of instances, the father appears to be a failure in the eyes of his wife, his children, his friends in the community, often even to himself. Most tragic is the effect on the children. Unemployment becomes a mental health problem which always affects two generations.

Serious too are the unhappiness and distress caused by the housing shortage, which makes it impossible for so many of our veterans and former war-workers to have homes or to find suitable accommodations in which to live. In 1946, we built approximately 500,000 homes but we needed 3,200,000. The resulting dislocation, crowding, and family friction compound an enormous emotional cost which will be paid for by those whose personalities cannot withstand the excessive stress.

One might continue this list almost indefinitely. The concomitant economic loss from strikes is not to be compared with the emotional cost to the workers, their families, and communities. The 350,000 persons who are permanently disabled each year as the result of accidents add to the amount of stress which must be borne by themselves and society. Systems of political graft leave their mark on weak or immature personalities.

As psychiatrists we meet the effects of these social ills in our daily work. As I have said, some of them are expressions of immaturity and the symptoms of maladjustment. Some of them are the cause of the stress which provokes the patient's complaints.

Psychiatry must occupy itself chiefly with trying to treat some of the psychological wounds and wrecks that civilization produces in human beings. Relief of their suffering commands the highest priority. But while doing so, psychiatrists become more and more aware of the increased need for supports against the stresses of the environment. The family, the community, the nation, can alter their organization and methods so as to promote richer, more satisfying, and therefore more mentally healthy life. The question then is — how to do so?

To the answering of this question the experts in many fields of human endeavor must direct their attention. Psychiatrists, along with psychologists and sociologists, are scientists concerned with understanding the why and how of man's feeling and thinking and acting. Psychiatrists as individuals and in groups have reached a new high in their interest in and study of social problems. They should be able to make a significant contribution to any panel of experts who would consider any or all of these social problems.



An Atlantic Story



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LOW WATER

by GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

GINO's was an island. Its inhabitants had a single culture; it was surrounded by a sea as acquiescent as they. In summer the happy Mediterranean disturbed Gino's not at all; in winter harsh little waves, last remnants of storm beyond the narrow bay, spat fiercely at the weed-draped jetty and gurgled away in dark impotence beneath the flooring. The piles which supported Gino's were rotten; the planks that joined the café to the mainland stayed in place by sheer inertia. Every year the many slopes of the tiled roof, the angles of the wooden walls, became crazier by another inch. When anything fell off, Gino, eventually, put it back again. Neither screw nor nail would grip in the soft timber. A hole under the eaves which had mildly annoyed his clients for two seasons he stopped with a broken frying pan, leaning a balk of driftwood against the wall to hold the patch in place.

The culture of Gino's island was listless and Levantine. Gino's passport was Syrian; his father was unknown; his mother had been half Kurd and half Maltese. The ancestry of his girls resembled his own, in so far as they were of mixed blood and obscure nationalities. The island industry was the provision of routine entertainment for summer visitors. Somebody had to undertake the job. It called neither for shame nor self-congratulation; it merely filled a social need, like unloading coal or selling hashish or cleaning sewers or becoming a policeman, and demanded — at any rate from Gino — no undignified activity of the body.

Gino was very long and very thin. His interior was full of national and foreign parasites, for he had

been poor and a traveler. To him his island was home at long last; upon it was no more need for energy or emotion. His only token of feeling was an undulation of the spine, which might have expressed satisfaction, at the same hour every morning when he rose from breakfast, took rod and line, and started to fish from the stage outside the kitchen door. He fished from eleven to six, sometimes sitting, sometimes standing, hunched over the Mediterranean, which sparkled and laughed at the foot of his steps and spread out beneath his island into a still lake of deep greens and browns, sown with traps and nets of his own devising.

He caught fish. He caught fish continuously. They came, it was said in the town, all the way across the Mediterranean for him to catch; and indeed Gino's island was about as far east as they could swim. It seemed to be a fish terminus and round point; after a quick nip from Gino's garbage or the soft ooze beneath his island, there was nothing for fish to do but turn back to Greece and Gibraltar and the rich North African banks.

Gino himself looked like an old gray mullet set up by a bad taxidermist who had put back the skin and forgotten the stuffing. His head was hairless and his dull eyes were too large. His fishlike mind knew none of the enthusiasms of humanity except the cooking of his catch. For this he was famous. Whether he fried to biscuit hardness in deep oil, or adventured in the casseroles and herbs and wine of French cuisine, or served his fish boiled and cold and decorated, they were products of high human art. His other cooking was vile. Indeed all of Gino that was not fish was distasteful.

He employed six performers. Each year they were sent to him by an agency in Alexandria. One of the batch had to be able to dance efficiently; two must be endurable, however sordid; the remaining three had just to get on and off the stage without incident, and were usually over forty. He paid wages and commission to the upper three and commission only to the lower three, and put them all up in rooms like sunlit bathing hutches on the floor above the café. It was strictly forbidden, both by Gino and the police, for gentlemen to visit the second floor; but the season was short, and the police were very poorly paid. Gino was indifferent to what went on upstairs unless the noise was too great. Then, in a barely audible voice, he pointed out that the house was very old and might fall down. If anyone were injured, he said, there would be a scandal.

2

THAT year there were scandals enough. They were the fault of Tatiana. She was an Egyptian with a Russian mother; in her character a faint and purely traditional Russianness had remained proof against the lethargy of Egypt. Tatiana was the star performer, and neither better nor worse than dancers whom the Alexandrian agency had sent to Gino in other years. Her morals, which mattered to nobody, were above the usual standard. Her behavior, for so conventional an island, was indiscreet. She gave parties to her favorites. She considered the whole upper story as her own, and dashed in and out of bedrooms at awkward moments. Her colleagues, who themselves observed the decent melancholy proper to Gino's, accepted Tatiana's instability as a new fashion from worldly Egypt and a useful topic of conversation.

The other two paid performers were Miriam and Elena the Greek. Miriam, being half Sudanese, was too black for popularity; Gino's clients preferred to cherish the illusion that they were being entertained by pure Europeans. Elena the Greek was born at Marseilles of port parentage, into which, somewhere, had entered a strain of Chinese blood; she was called the Greek because that was the language she spoke most fluently. The three girls who worked for commission alone had the names and nationalities that the agency had given them. They were old, pink animals who answered to these names. How or in what memory each addressed herself could not be known. They lived in a dead present, untroubled by remembered suffering. They had no clear thought left to them, and little revealing speech.

Gino's season was short, and it was not much of a season. People with money went to Alexandria or the cool heights of Lebanon. From June to September the two hotels of the little town and the red and white villas, set irregularly among dusty

country lanes, were reasonably full of Christian Arab families attracted by the hard and waveless beach. The fathers and the elder sons, dignified and respectable by day, considered it proper to relax at night. Gino's represented for them the smart cabarets of French *plages* and Florida beaches familiarized by the cinema.

Upstairs and downstairs Tatiana disordered the island. She was always surrounded by two or three young admirers, who were fascinated into outrageous behavior, though not into any lavish spending. She had a dashing habit of throwing her cocktails overboard "to feed the fishes." This might have been good for trade if she and her parties had not thrown the glasses and crockery as well. To Gino, Tatiana was a liability, a shock, a devastation. She kept the older, slow-consuming, steadily paying clients away. The noise and scandal raised the weekly subvention paid to the police. The glasses were replaceable only at fantastic prices.

Gino increased the bills by erratic and exaggerated items which led to endless arguments with the clients and, after all, had to be reduced. He left his basic charges unaltered. They were reasonable. Indeed he charged little more than the hotels, although, besides the performers, there were a band and three waiters to be paid, and a cook who attended to Gino's stove when Gino himself was, reluctantly, gazing at the floor. He felt that he ought to gaze — so far, that is, as *ought* had any meaning for him — but he said no word, he took no action. He had no interest in women, individually or collectively. They were like the bottles of Egyptian whiskey. There was a demand for the stuff, and he supplied it.

His fitful attempts to keep up with rising costs and wages were always a year behind. He had made his calculations when he bought and fitted out the island, and felt that the one effort should be sufficient for his life; it had to be done, but thereafter there should be no necessity for thought. Beneath the floor the bountiful sea worked for him in darkness. Above was modest catering for the eternal desires of men. Neither one nor the other could fail.

The season was disastrous. At the beginning of September there was nothing in the bank, and the night's takings were paid out every morning. The wages of Tatiana, Miriam, and Elena fell into arrears. As yet they did not complain. It was not the first time in their experience that the boss had been in difficulties.

On the next payless Saturday morning there was a row. Wages and commission were now three weeks overdue, and obviously lost forever. Even the three working crones, holding around their shapeless bodies wraps of pink and pale blue chiffon, stared at Gino with sad eyes in which was understanding of their fate. Tatiana, trim and terrifying in a beach suit, screamed at him in good Egyptian Arabic. He

was impassive. He bent his shoulders humbly over the till, as if it were the sea, and opened it and showed that there was nothing in it. Tatiana raged around the unswept room, moving, an angry portent of certain grace and comparative cleanliness, between four greasy wine-splashed walls, the foul ash trays, the spilled food, the tables stinking of sweat and debris. She hurled a bottle into the sea, and was led upstairs, weeping, by Miriam and Elena. The other three returned to bed and their long daydreams of the impossible. Gino went out to fish.

The sun shone. The paintless wooden balconies of the upper story gave back the light of the day and the light of a hundred years, sparkling brown and white like timber on the southern edge of a forest. Tatiana, Miriam, and Elena lay in the shade of the eaves, cursing Gino. When they were silent, they could hear the plop of his tackle re-entering the water, or the reverberation of a sea bream smacking its arched body against the planks of the back-door jetty.

3

NIGHT brought the end. There was no band. There were no waiters. There was no assistant cook. All had gone to the hotels to make what they could in the last week before the season finished. There were a few clients. They listened to abuse of Gino, and agreed. They helped themselves and the girls to drinks, and paid what they liked or nothing at all. Gino did not appear. In an hour the café had emptied. There was no gaiety, no romance. The island and its inhabitants appeared exactly what they were. The girls, like the clients, had looked to the night and music, even at Gino's, to create an endurable illusion. Now there were only themselves and the sea and the slap of moths and insects, before unnoticed, against the glaring lights. They sat still, scattered about the room at the tables where they had been left, without energy or desire to move together.

Gino came in from the kitchen, bearing a huge casserole of fish. The scent, rich and appetizing, overwhelmed the staleness of the room. He put the dish on a table, with six flat cakes of bread, beckoned to the girls, and went out.

They moved to the food slowly, and as if ashamed by their failure to retain a single client. Then Tatiana, with a brisk exclamation, threw away the filthy tablecloth. The others, catching her mood of self-respect, swiftly washed knives and forks, glasses and plates left untouched since the previous night. They chose clean chairs and sat down at the bare table, three a side, as in some institution for homeless females deserted by all but themselves. They began to laugh and chatter. Gino's fish was in no way institutional. It warmed and delighted.

They went to bed early, breathing for an extra

four hours, instead of smoke, the cool air currents of the bay, and awakened to a vague feeling of holiday rather than disaster. Miriam made coffee, and they breakfasted on the balcony. Then, as the heat of sand and dusty tracks consumed the morning, they saw their position in all its hopelessness.

It was Gino's responsibility to return them to Alexandria, and it was certain that he could not do it. They all spoke loudly of their contracts and of the Law that would, if necessary, compel him to sell his island to pay their fares. They gesticulated at a just and imaginary judge, but in their hearts they knew that they were terrified by the Law, upon whose edge they lived, and had no intention of calling to their aid the unknowable, uncontrollable gods of policemen.

They were too far east for chivalry. Tatiana and Miriam ran over the characters and probable bank balances of their devoted clients, in the hope of finding one who might be gallant. Any, they decided, would provide food and bed, especially bed, for the few more days that he would remain at the seaside; not one would commit the generous folly of advancing the fare to Alexandria, or even — in view of their known economic distress — of allowing them to earn it. Either Miriam or Tatiana might perhaps make enough for herself to go, but not enough for any of the others. Though they had not hitherto been conscious of much liking for each other, and though the three wage earners despised the three commissionaires, as Tatiana christened them, the solidarity of their profession — they called it the theatrical profession — prevented them from leaving behind any of their number to end, with certainty, in some horrible village brothel.

There were no capitalists among the fathers and sons who took their holiday by that horned beach. Money counted, even when Tatiana was feeding the fishes and creating an illusion of imperial excess. Money counted, especially if an entertainer, in the light of the forenoon, was worn and weary, and distressed.

Tatiana could raise — probably — from an old friend in Alexandria the money for her fare. Miriam had a contract half promised for the winter, and thought, not very hopefully, that the agency might lend her what she needed. Elena the Greek, who could dance just enough for a joint such as Gino's, but looked, without make-up on a blazing morning, like a slender Chinese grandmother, had no hope at all. The three commissionaires listened with dazed attention to the discussion among their betters. They would not have been surprised if Tatiana had produced thousands of piastres from a hat or if she had told them to go and prostitute themselves upon the beach. Whatever she decided, they would perform.

Tatiana and Miriam decided nothing. They dived, exasperated, from the balcony into the caressing sea, two worn but serviceable arrows of

black and white, startling Gino and wrecking his fishing for that morning.

The day passed in intolerable nervousness. Tatiana, Miriam, and Elena the Greek were not accustomed to be idle without a purpose. They rose usually at midday, fiddled with their breakfasts and complexions for a couple of hours, practiced a few dance steps, showed themselves in whatever public place was temporarily in fashion, then passed the evening with some admirer until it was time to go to work. With Gino's broke and the season nearly over, there was nothing to be gained by visiting the town, nor had they the heart for it. They remained in their rooms or on the balcony, quarreling, screaming, in tears, demoralized.

At sunset Gino shut the wooden doors on the gangway to his island, and put up a notice of CLOSED in Arabic and French. Then he took his boat and lamp and fish spear, and disappeared into the darkness of the bay. He said nothing whatever to the girls, accepting their forced occupation of his island without resentment, without pity, without helpfulness.

The soft splash of Gino's oars recalled them to sanity. They stared after him into the calm blackness of the sea. They could hear him; they could see the twin phosphorescent puddles of the oars receding into the distance, but the boat itself was invisible. Their fear of this isolation was extreme. All quarrels forgotten, they drew together on the balcony. The lights of the little town glittered half a mile away. The villas were nearer, but their lit windows were so scattered over the coastal plain that they only increased the sense of loneliness. In the girls' minds, and indeed in fact, they were castaways; it mattered nothing that their island was joined to all Asia by only a dozen planks.

They crept downstairs and turned up the lights in the kitchen. All day they had not had the energy to eat. There were bread and vegetables and a few eggs. Fish there was none, for Gino never kept it overnight. Miriam again turned cook. They ate in silence, exhausted and hopeless.

The effort of cooking and feeding did them good. Their washing up extended itself spontaneously from the plates to Gino's revolting kitchen. They were six women who had seldom had goods of their own to scrub and polish. Not one of them would have done a stroke of work for Gino, but this was for themselves. The silence, the closed door, the sea around and under, impressed it on them that it was for themselves.

By morning the unconscious communal spirit of discipline was dead. No one made breakfast. They drifted down to the café and drifted back into the bedrooms to continue the interminable discussions. At least they were all calmer. One of the commissionaires had a touch of sunburn; it made her pudgy face look firm and elastic.

At ten Tatiana took command and persuaded

Miriam to the kitchen. It was clean as they had left it. On the table were two flat baskets, a yard in diameter, piled with fish, among them a dozen fat, expensive soles. Tatiana, impressed by this industry, observed that Gino had eaten nothing. Outside on the jetty his indifferent back was towards them, hunched over the rod. Patronizingly she offered him a cup of coffee and the last of the bread. He accepted without pleasure or surprise, and thanked her. His words were formal Arabic courtesies, meaning nothing: phrases by which two human beings could converse for minutes without the need of any thought at all. She asked him what to do with the fish. Gino shrugged his shoulders. If people came to eat it, they ate it; if they didn't, nobody ate it. He landed a red mullet and paid no further attention to Tatiana.

For all their working lives Tatiana and Miriam had depended on manager or proprietor. His was the responsibility, theirs the obedience. Even Tatiana's Russian liveliness was purely professional. Her plan for living was to make the clients spend in return for her wages and commission. Her future was a succession of engagements at third-class cabarets. Her firm faith, founded on nothing, was that they would become first-class cabarets before she was too old.

The boss of the moment might be inefficient or exacting, lecherous or contemptuous, broke or miserly or generous; but the boss he was. He did not merely live, as they, between four walls from nine in the evening to three in the morning. He was in the mysterious outer world of contracts, arrangements, recommendations. Looking at Gino's back, it was evident to Tatiana and Miriam that they were, for the first time, without a boss, and that Gino was in their own world of helpless resignation. He might as well have been the ghost of a fisherman sitting outside his own backdoor.

Even this understanding of Gino did not move them to any constructive plan. Indeed their angry chatter reached new depths of futility. All former schemes, however wild, had depended on Gino being forced to do something. They had at last realized that nothing would force him to do anything.

4

IT WAS the fish that made the plan. There it lay, in quantity, luxurious. Alongside the baskets was the empty bread bin. Without need of imagination, the economic problem solved itself. Two of the commissionaires put on aprons of sacking and Gino's shoes — for their own had the high heels of their vocation — and shuffled off to the town with the fish baskets upon their heads. They returned at midday, weary, humiliated, miserable, but with bread and groceries and money over. Fresh sole was fifteen piastres a kilo on the market. The girls were all ignorant of common commerce, and amazed.

Day after day passed while they ate and slept well, and fussed frantically to get themselves away. Gino wandered through and among them on his own plane, occasionally cooking, always unseeing, and, after a while, unnoticed. Those who could write with ease wrote letters to the Alexandrian agency, to cabaret proprietors in Beirut and Cairo, to old admirers, to anyone they had ever known with money to lend or employment to offer. The only result of all this fevered, impractical planning, this seesaw of hope, these hysterical visits to the post office to insist that letters had been lost, was that Elena the Greek was lent a pound by her sister. They tried to plan how it should be spent, but the island imposed its own solution. The pound immediately went on soap and a washtub.

The town returned to its winter peace. Gino and his girls had provided a week of scandal, conjecture, and conversation, and a week was all they were worth. Nobody bothered them. They bothered nobody. On the island they were brown, healthy, and rested, but neither knew nor felt the improvement. They were dull with fear of poverty, of illness and starvation, and when they thought, they had no hope; but they had little time to think. The island was their taskmaster.

Organization grew, though they intended none. Tatiana, by reason of her education, was general manager. Miriam was assistant cook. Elena the Greek, who had a passion for neatness perhaps inherited from that unknown Chinese ancestor, expended it upon the crusted dirt of Gino's hidden corners. Two of the commissionaires were becoming known in a more friendly fish market. The third was washerwoman. To all the girls their life seemed inactive and frustrated, for they were unaware of their achievement. Their only comfort was the superb fish supper that Gino often made for them. He seemed to enjoy their appreciation. He said nothing, but his body undulated graciously as he set the dish upon the table.

At the end of October the first storm roared down

the Mediterranean and over the town. With Gino's island it merely played, for wind and sea were diverted by the sheltering promontory to the north. The wind was neither cold nor convincing; it whistled merrily round the ill-fitting eaves and slammed the bedroom doors. The sea, excitedly sucking and splashing, managed to wet three steps of Gino's jetty that had been dry all the summer. Gino lit the iron stove in the café, packing it with cut driftwood. Where the plates were thin with age and the blacking worn away, the stove glowed red and comforting.

Wind, sea, and fire emphasized the passing of time. Tatiana revolted. She shouted that they could not stay, that winter was coming, that this could not go on. She crashed a plate upon the floor and earned a reproachful look from Elena. They all listened while she cried and cursed; they had no answer to her repeated question of what they were to do. They looked at her, disconcerted by her vehemence, as if she were destroying some feminine, delicately poised, illusive truth. In the silence the washerwoman spoke.

"Here we eat," she said.

The comment was unanswerable. It referred to the present, that present in which the commissionaires had learned through timeless suffering to exist; yet in its profundity was hidden an illimitable future. If they wished, on Gino's island they might eat forever. The warmth of the stove blended serenely with the warmth of the food within them. The storm was for others, not for them. Their dreams changed in that moment — those vague intentions which supported the lonely, personal life of each battered individual. They were back in the field of women: of eagerness and the possibility of love, of industry, and of abounding health. They even had a willing servant, who asked only to remain, unresisting, upon his island. Impulsively Tatiana began the new world by a single act of creation. She rose from the table to give Gino orders for the morrow.





At every stage of his development, Man has tried to read the future. In America numerologists, astrologists, palmists, and mediums still beckon the gullible. A Bantu diviner gets his advance information from bones, and in Borneo the behavior of birds is the best clue to the future. In this article, drawn from his forthcoming book, The Heathens: Primitive Man and His Religions, William Howells has collected the more significant omens and portents. He is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin.

ORACLES AND OMENS

by WILLIAM HOWELLS

I

FORTUNETELLING is dear to our hearts, and there is no doubt that the art of divining is the most persistent and popular of all our non-Christian religious activities. However it is done, divination means getting information about the future, or about things which are otherwise hidden (What is Uncle Joe leaving me in his will?), by some use of oracles and omens; getting word about human affairs from non-human sources. You see a sign, and you know that it is connected directly with something else, just as a drop in the barometer is connected with an approaching storm. You accept the usual fallacies of magic and add one more: that future events are certain rather than merely probable.

The magical kind of divination, by signs and portents (it is called mantic science), proceeds either by omens, in which you simply make note of something you see, or else by some kind of mechanical oracle necessitating your performing an experiment in order to get an answer.

The Nandi, a cattle-herding people of East Africa, use few or no devices, but they are forever watching for omens, which they have built up into a tremendous lore. This seems to be their main religious preoccupation, keeping a herdsman busy when he has nothing to do. If a rat crosses your path, that is good; but if it is a snake, that is bad. If you stub your big toe, that is good; but if it is one of your other toes, it is bad. All day long a Nandi is keeping score, to see how he stands by night. In contrast to this omen-taking, the near-by Azande of the Congo and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan do divining by special mechanical means which they have contrived and which they use constantly; it is their great defense against witchcraft.

Omens come largely out of purely natural phenomena. Astrology is the prize example of the

hypertrophy of an omen system. It uses all the heavenly bodies, putting them into every possible relation, real or imaginary, significant or not, so that an infinite number of individual horoscopes may be turned out. It has been running on for centuries, unchecked by any spirit of inquiry other than books written to prove its accuracy after the event; and because of its antiquity it is all the more complicated, and can quote ancient authority and use a preposterous jargon to give itself airs. It was once deeply entrenched in more than one religion, of course, especially those of Central America and of Babylonia. It was respectable then; its fall from grace is recent, caused by its giving birth to a true science, astronomy. Modern astrology is the bilge which has been wrung out of astronomy proper.

Other manifestations of the heavens, like eclipses, or comets, or lightning, are used without reference to astrology, for simpler purposes of deciding whether or not to proceed with something. In Greece a sacred procession from Athens to Delphi waited upon a signal of lightning.

Animals are another great source of information. This is not because they know, themselves, what is in the offing, but simply that they act as signs and as guides. It may be that their appearance alone is important; the Bushmen of South Africa rejoice to see a mantis. Or animals may constitute a sign foreordained by the gods: Cadmus had to follow a cow for a long time before she settled down to show him where to found a town, and in the very same way, the ancient Aztecs wandered until they saw an eagle sitting on a cactus and holding a serpent in its mouth, and there they founded Mexico City. These two examples are, of course, both legendary.

The art of reading a message from the flight of birds (called ornithomancy among the ancients) was the main stock-in-trade of the augurs of ancient

Greece and Rome; if they were not suited by the way the birds flew, nothing could take place. This is by no means peculiar to the people of classical times, being used in many parts of the primitive world. The natives of the interior of Borneo are especially bird-ridden; they will not start to build a house (a major undertaking, up to four hundred yards long) until the birds give their assent, and they will stop at once if, while they are at it, the birds change the complexion of their omens. They have found that the most practical way of getting something done is to begin the job with a rush when the birds give the sign, and thereupon to send out small boys to beat gongs and keep the birds away; then they are sure there will be no bad omens because there will not be any omens at all.

The ancients on occasion used a pit of snakes or a tankful of fish as a source of omens. Such a thing as this marks the beginning of getting the omens under your own control, and so being able to consult them whenever you see fit. One of the classical methods was to feed grain to sacred chickens; if they ate heartily, the interpretation was "Do"; if they were reluctant, "Don't." Recall the case of Admiral P. Claudius, in charge of a Roman force about to attack the Carthaginians in the First Punic War. Naval doctrine apparently prescribed this chicken-feeding (called *alectryomancy* by savants) as part of the business of arriving at a sound military decision, and so he was equipped with the holy pullets, doubtless under the charge of his intelligence officer. These were duly broken out, and grain was put down on the deck for them. Alas, the chickens were stricken with *mal de mer*, and stood uncertainly by the rail, indifferent to food. Claudius watched this for a bit and then lost his patience, roared "If they won't eat, let them drink," had the chickens thrown over the side, and hoisted the order to engage. But the chickens were right; he lost the battle. Says Cicero: "This joke, when the fleet was defeated, brought many a tear to him, and mighty carnage to the Roman people."

Where the Romans used chickens the Azande use termites. When a Zande has some minor question, he cuts two sticks of wood, of different kinds. He takes these to a termite mound and pokes a hole in it, to which the termites come in swarms. He speaks to them, asking them his question and telling them to eat one of the sticks if the answer is yes, and the other if the answer is no. Then he puts the sticks in the hole and fills the space around them, leaves them overnight, and comes back the next day to see what has happened. Even if neither stick or both sticks have been eaten, something can be made out of it.

Another principal business of the augurs was *haruspication*, or inspecting the entrails of animals (usually pigs) to read messages. It was the conformation of the lobes of the liver, in particular,

which gave significant indications of the will of the gods. This again, like so many classical religious customs, is shared by primitive groups in several parts of the world. A variation of it is making notes on the manner in which a wounded animal dies. A chicken is treated thus in Nigeria. The Nilotic Negroes along the White Nile sacrifice bulls to their high god by spearing them, but they take the opportunity to observe in which direction the dying animal staggers, and on which side it finally falls down. Still another variety of dependence on animals is the burning of bones, especially shoulder blades, which was ancient and widespread in the Far East. A shoulder blade of a turtle, sheep, or deer, not yet dried out, was cast into the fire and after a while taken out again. The cracks produced by the heating were then read much as we read the palm of the hand; this is called *scapulimancy* or *omoplatoscopy*.

2

FROM such a thing it is but a step to purely inanimate objects for divining, mechanical contrivances which call for somebody to manipulate them. Casting lots in one way or another is an old and popular fashion, the present scene of its greatest popularity probably being among the Bantu peoples of South Africa. Here there is commonly used a set of four bones, which represent an old and a young man and an old and a young woman, which are thrown on the ground to make a pattern. There may be added to these another large set of animal bones, also paired by sexes—usually it is the astragalus bone, of the ankle. These represent not only the animals who furnished them, but also other things or attributes attached to them, in a sort of zodiacal linkage: the bones of the male and female impala represent the chief and his wife; the wart hog, who roots things up, the diviner; the baboon, who is not a roaming animal, the village; and the panther, the white people; various shells represent everyday happenings in life. When these are all thrown on the ground, a trained diviner can reap a tremendous amount of information from their various relationships as they lie. Elsewhere in Africa groups of sticks are thrown down like jackstraws, for the same purpose. In Dahomey, in West Africa, there is a much more formal system than the South African one: sixteen palm nut kernels are thrown down in pairs, successively, and the results read from a rigid code of interpretation.

Our European past abounds in the same kind of thing. You need only remember that cards, dice, and even jackstones were invented for divination and not for games, and cards at least have never lost this function. People have stared at crystals, at fires, at fountains, at smoke, at the wind in the trees and the clouds in the sky and the surface of

the water; they have swung rings, shears, and sieves from pieces of string; they have stuck knives into books, thrown grain in the air, dropped hot wax into water — and they are still at it. Perhaps the only thing that should puzzle us is why so many methods have fallen into disuse, and why the few have succeeded. I can see the reason for the vitality of astrology, but I do not see why other methods have been largely stripped down to numerology, palmistry, and tea leaves. I suppose the last is good for tea shoppes, and the others are the most convenient; you take your name and your palm wherever you go. You can, it is true, still buy many articles for divination in the home, such as ouija boards, and gadgets which you can suspend over a letter to tell you whether the writer is male or female.

3

I HAVE said that the Azande of the Belgian Congo are specialists in astral research. They have been established as such by E. E. Evans-Pritchard in a wonderful book, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*. I wish to describe their two main oracular methods, to show a case of a primitive nation which has come to place much of its reliance for peace of mind in this art.

I gave their system of consulting termites as a sample. More involved is their rubbing board. This is a miniature table, carved out of wood, which has two straight legs and a sort of curved tail, together with another piece of wood the size of the table top, which is slid around on the latter by means of an upright handle. The juice or soft meat of a certain fruit is put on the table top, and the opposite part is moistened and put down over it, and pushed back and forth. Such is the quality of the juice and the two pieces of wood that the upper piece either goes on gliding smoothly over the lower, or else it soon sticks to it quite tightly so that it cannot be pushed back and forth and has to be pulled off. This is all there is to it, and the worker simply asks the board a question, telling it to stick for a yes and slide for a no. It usually leaves no doubt as to what it is doing, either sliding smoothly or sticking promptly, and so it gives the impression that it knows what it is saying and has no doubt in its mind. The occasions on which it misbehaves, by getting only partially stuck or not sliding readily, are easily interpreted as caused by a question being asked wrongly or stupidly, or by the board's seeing complications which have escaped the questioner. It is a useful and well-liked oracle, and one that the Azande use all the time, because it can be referred to readily. They are continually demanding things of it, wanting to know if they should build a house here or plant a garden there, if a witch is after them, if they will die this year.

There is no doubt that the board is susceptible of being manipulated, just like a ouija board, and that the Azande do tend to control its actions. The selections it makes are usually the reasonable ones, and of course it seldom tells a man who is working it that he will die soon. How far people are aware they are tampering with it, or whether they have any sense of cheating, nobody can say, but that of course is a question which is present in every kind of divination in which the performer has any chance to affect the performance or interpret the result. This is not a complaint, because that is divination's bedside manner; it would be of no comfort to people if it dealt out harsh predictions in equal quantity with the sunny ones. I do not know of any statistics, but I should guess that reassuring trade horoscopes must outnumber disturbing ones by about a thousand to one, and I cannot imagine the most punctilious palmist giving a John Dillinger or a Baby Face Nelson even an approximation of his character and fate.

The Azande's main oracle, entirely overshadowing the others, is a poison, named benge, which they feed to chickens. Divining by poisoning fowls is widespread in Africa, but it reaches its zenith among the Azande. As they use it, benge is a red powder made from a forest creeper, mixed with water to make a paste. They have to journey to the Mangbetu country to get the plant, and it is consequently expensive. It is an alkaloid poison related to strychnine, and it has the peculiar property of killing some chickens and leaving others unaffected, within the usual limits of the doses used by the Azande.

Benge séances are held privately, away from the village, and out of sight of women, who are a bad influence on it and might spoil it just by looking at it. The man conducting the consultation mixes the poison into a paste, rolls some up in a leaf, and squeezes it into a chicken's beak, as though he were lettering a cake. He nods the bird's head to make it swallow, and at this point begins to state the question. He does this quite fully, addressing not the chicken but the benge itself, first setting out the general problem and then adding further details, and expending eloquence on it when he is able. The benge is asked, as carefully as possible, to kill the bird if one answer or view of the case is the correct one or, reversing and restating matters, to spare it if the other side is right. During this time the chicken may have been given a second dose, and shaken up a little. Benge serves so well as a method because it usually allows several minutes to elapse before having any effect, and then either continues to produce no effect whatever or else sends the bird into spasms and kills it quickly and decisively. Seldom is there any halfway stage, when a chicken takes sick but recovers. It is not a question of the efficacy of a given lot of poison or of the strength of the mixture, for the same batch

of benge will leave the birds alive or dead in about equal numbers. Furthermore, the size and health of a bird and the number of doses given it do not have a bearing on its survival.

The Azande rely on benge thoroughly, and its decisions have the force of law, especially when obtained by the chief or his officer. It can be asked about anything and it definitely must be referred to in certain affairs, such as where a child should be born or whether it is all right to make a journey or move to a new house. A man would simply be remiss if he failed to poison a chicken before embarking on such a venture; and indeed, if he had the time, a Zande would ask benge about his every move, although this would run into poultry. That is why a rubbing board is such a useful supplement, because it is easier; if he can, a man takes it everywhere, and he never enters another village or leaves it without asking his rubbing board at what time and by what path he should come or go. Azande life is obsessed by oracles — benge, rubbing boards, termite sticks, and certain others — which sit across the natives' psychic outlook like a pair of spectacles and fulfill some of the functions of gods in other societies.

A characteristic of Azande oracles which makes them somewhat different from divination by animals or by mechanical means is the reverential attitude of the natives toward them. Benge is looked on as a sort of mystical force, and this prevents their thinking of it as a poison. They also keep certain tabus in connection with its use, which would spoil its power if not observed: they cannot, before working it, eat elephant, fish, or certain vegetables, smoke hemp, or make love. The rubbing board likewise is looked on as something conscious and not simply inanimate, and its workers are also under obligations to eat certain medicines and to treat the board in a formal manner. Similarly, in Dahomey, West Africa, the throwing of palm nut kernels is presided over by Fa, goddess of fate, and the practice is accompanied by small amounts of prayer to her.

Here we are on the border line between the idea that divination is simply taking the cover off nature, magically, and the belief that it is supplication to a conscious, knowing being for information. The magical attitude remains the ruling one, however, not so much because the trappings are magical as because man is in control of the performance. He can employ the oracle at his whim, needing only to be correct about it, and the oracle has no choice; it must produce an answer, and the correct one, every time. In this light it does not matter what the people believe to lie behind the oracle itself, dictating its revelations, because they use it and think of it as a piece of magic. But there is an ambiguity nevertheless, suggestive of the other end of the scale, where there are kinds of divination in which the shoe is on the other foot.

Most of these other types use a medium, rather than omens or non-human oracles, through whom a god or a spirit makes himself manifest, and there is much more of the notion that this spirit talks at his own pleasure and not that of the seekers. The tip of this 'end of the divinistic scale is represented by prophets, who are singled out by a deity as a vehicle through which to transmit a revelation to the people. Prophets have direct-wire communication, like Moses, through whom Jehovah issued the entire Hebraic code of law, voluminously and explicitly. The shaman, who is a widespread type of primitive medium, also has this direct contact with spirits who impart messages to him. Some prophets of history and of the savage world have received apparitions or inspirations which were not clear as to their meaning; that is, signs rather than declarations from above, and so have had to provide an interpretation themselves. Such prophets as these — and indeed any prophet — are therefore in a position to lay down the law themselves or construe it to their purposes. At any rate, the familiar sects are so full of illustrations of prophecy and revelation that there is no point in singling out a few.

4

DIFFERENT from prophets are human oracles, or mediums in our usual sense. They do not recount a revelation after they have received it, but rather speak publicly with the very voice of the god himself. The obvious example is the Delphic Sybil who for centuries delivered utterances while possessed, which were enigmatic as to their meaning and were recorded and interpreted by the priests of the oracle. This is well paralleled among the Polynesians, who had a similar subject, called a kaula in Hawaii. This person, male or female, was entered, usually at a feast, by a god who sat in the person's stomach. The medium shortly went into convulsions and began talking in shrill cries or a squeaking voice; this was the god's own manner of speaking, and not the subject's. As at Delphi, the communiqué was apt to be obscure as to its sense, so that the priests might have to clarify it, although on occasion the god talked plainly. The medium had the appetite of the god, as well as the voice, and is said to have eaten enormous amounts of food while possessed.

This is the class, I suppose, into which we should put our own minor-league spiritualists, who put out the lights and then speak for the spooks of Indian chiefs and little girls (not having quite the impious brass to represent gods). I do not see why the controls are so commonly of these two kinds — in real life they would be about the most incompetent informants you could find in a month's journey — but perhaps it is because the Indians, at least, did not get baptized, and so their shades

are to be found frequenting paleface séances instead of playing a harp in the happy hunting ground.

Getting in touch with the souls of the dead is of course not a civilized monopoly at all. The business is called necromancy and it goes on everywhere, with many special diviners to do it, who are apt to use an actual bone belonging to the departed in order to make the contact. Rousing the dead is also an important department of shamanism.

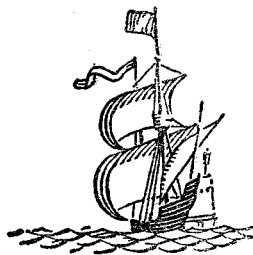
There are various other patterns of personal divination, akin to those above, in which possession or control by a superior being is not implicit. Dreaming is the most general of all, and this is an endless subject in itself; all peoples have about the same approach to interpreting dreams, however, taking them as forthright or disguised prophecies, or sometimes as meetings with the dead. It is seldom that dreams are thought to have any particular agent sending them; they are usually accepted simply as a window on the supernatural. In the Old Testament, however, the Lord used dreams to communicate with various people, and in Greece it was possible to obtain a dream sent by a god by sleeping in that god's temple. In the Sahara, a Tuareg woman who wants news of an absent husband will spend the night sleeping on an ancient tomb. A spirit of the dead, named Idebni, will come to her, and if he likes her looks he will tell her what she wants to know. If he doesn't like her looks he will strangle her.

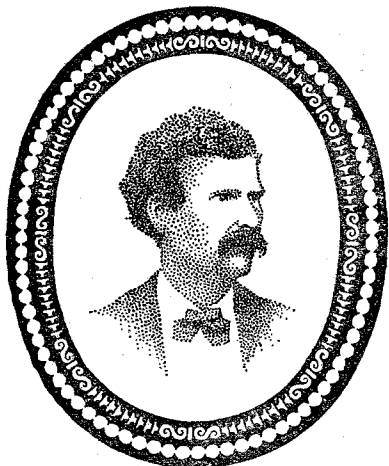
There are other diviners whose supernatural powers are thought to be their own, and who frankly owe nothing to the help of spirits. A Zulu seer can answer questions on occult matters, with the help of questioners who lead him on and warm him up; they go at it like Mr. Bones and Mr. Interlocutor, and before getting to the real question involved, he is tested by having to find or describe some purposely hidden object like a button to see

if he is in good working order. Some of these powers are actually based on unconscious psychological responses. Crystal-gazers look into the ball until they see a shape which gives them a meaningful impression, much as we see a cloud which makes us think of an elephant. Some, by listening intently, believe they hear snatches of secrets from sea shells held to their ears. And dowsers are the somewhat mysterious people who can use divining rods to find water, or metals, and who were once thought able to track criminals.

In its simpler forms divination is probably harmless and makes a source of easy reassurance. Doubtless it has often had a beneficial effect on a society. Where the diviner comes to be a respected figure, the position will attract intelligent and trustworthy men, who usually understand their responsibility and who, though believing generally in their oracles, will modify questions and answers to fit policies which they know to be for the general welfare. This sounds a little utopian, but it is evident that in certain cultures, like that of the South African Bantu, this does take place. Thus divining can lend its authority to good purposes.

Divination certainly dies hard; it is remarkable how overwhelming a proportion of our ties with the native cults lie in this field. The reason must be that it gives people something Christianity does not, and will not. No such high philosophy as Christianity could ask its believers for patience with life and trust in God on the one hand, and on the other sanction fortunetelling, or approve of wandering spirits smuggling information across the Great Divide to a privileged few. And yet good Christians will use the Bible as a means of divining or discovering secrets, in ways for which it was never intended. And the country is full of well-dressed churchgoers who have no idea of the extent of their own heathenism in such beliefs.





DIXON WECTER has recently been appointed Literary Editor of the Mark Twain estate. Last August he made the trip by riverboat down the Mississippi with Mark's pilot book to guide him to the old landmarks. Now at the Huntington Library, as Chairman of the Research Group, he is editing the unpublished letters of Mark Twain, of which the most endearing are those to his fiancée, later his wife, Olivia Langdon. In the earlier selections which appeared in the November and December issues, we saw Mark, the suitor, forswearing profanity, tobacco, and alcohol and pledging himself to read Beecher's sermons.

THE LOVE LETTERS OF MARK TWAIN

Edited by Dixon Wecter

IN Salisbury when a gentleman remarked upon my taking the trouble to telegraph a Merry Christmas to my wife, saying it was the sort of thing to do with a *sweetheart*, I dosed him up very promptly, and said I did not allow any man to refer to my wife jestingly, however respectful he might intend to be. He apologized profusely." Thus wrote Mark Twain from an English lecture tour, to Livy in Hartford, some years after their marriage.

The love letters of Mark Twain did not cease when the girl was won. During the separations of a few weeks or months enforced by business trips at home and abroad, or an occasional week in New York while she remained at home, he resumed the courtship by correspondence begun long ago in 1868 and rewarded by their union in February, 1870. Believing, all his life, that most men are unworthy of most women — and understanding, as he did, the chivalry of King Arthur's Court and the Middle Ages and the cult of Saint Joan because they proceeded on the same assumption — he was cast by nature in the role of *cavaliere servente*. "I am very much obliged to you for marrying me," he once wrote Livy in the middle years. Most

poignant of all are the little notes he scribbled to Livy in her last illness, of which Clara Clemens in *My Father Mark Twain* has given a few samples — scraps of paper sent in on meal trays or delivered by the nurse, after the doctor had forbidden his visits.

Some hitherto unpublished letters from their married life, a sampling of the almost daily messages he sent when journeys kept them apart, will help to round out this portrait of Mark Twain in love. To do more than skim the surface is manifestly impossible; occasionally he wrote as often as four times a day.

The first year of their life together was dogged by family illness, grief, and distractions. After devoted nursing by the young couple, Livy's father died in the summer of 1870; a few weeks later, a school friend who had come to visit Livy in Buffalo sickened and died there of typhoid fever. Mark and Livy's first child and only son, Langdon, was born prematurely in November; his delicate health and that of his mother for many months afterward remained a constant source of worry in the family. For Mark the editorial routine of the *Buffalo Express* meant drudgery, midnight labor, and harassing

deadlines. After the bleak winter of 1870–1871 in Buffalo, in disgust he sold out his newspaper interest, put up the honeymoon house for sale, took Livy and the baby to Elmira, and a few months later moved them permanently to Hartford, where his publishers and many of his new friends lived.

Henceforth the picture brightened. The mother and child gained strength; a new book about Mark's Western years, called *Roughing It*, rapidly took shape. When it was done, he set to work writing some lectures about Artemus Ward and other picturesque characters he had known. In mid-October he started once more on the Redpath circuit, beginning at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He loved the momentary successes of the platform, when speaker and audience kindled together, but disliked the irregular hours, tedious hosts and callers, and above all the lack of Livy's care and companionship.

His metropolitan opening of the season was in Boston, on November 1, and about this ordeal he grew more than a little nervous. "Boston must sit up and behave, and do right by me. As Boston goes, so goes New England," he noted on the eve of this date. But the next night, before falling exhausted into bed, he took pen in hand to share his triumph with Livy: "People say Boston audiences ain't responsive. People lie. Boston audiences get perfectly uproarious when they get started. *I* am satisfied with tonight." Using this city as his main base, he embarked upon a strenuous tour of the New England towns. Portland he loved, but ruefully found in Worcester "the staidest, puritanical people you ever saw — one of the hardest gangs to move that ever was. By George the next time I come here I mean to put some cathartic pills in my lecture." The critical mood was still upon him a couple of days later, when he attended a Press Club dinner on November 11, and wrote home the next day.

BOSTON, Sunday, [Nov. 12, 1871]

Livy darling, I missed church by waking up too late, tho' I intended to go.

Went to the Press dinner last night. The responses to the *regular* toasts were tip-top; but as it was a cold-water dinner (the absurdity of it!) the flow of impromptu wit and wisdom on the *irregular* call was the flattest I *ever* heard. The thing got so melancholy that it broke up at 10.30 — and with a sigh instead of a hurrah. I dearly love a public dinner — but next time I'll inquire whether the inspiration is to be cold water or champagne.

I kind of look for a letter from you to-day — it's about time. Kiss the cubbie and mother for me. With unfailing love.

SAML

HAVERHILL, [Nov. 16, 1871]

Livy darling, it was a dreadfully stormy night, the train was delayed a while, and when I got to

the hall it was half an hour *after* the time for the lecture to begin. But not a soul had left the house. I went right through the audience in my overcoat and overshoes with carpet bag in hand, and undressed on the stage in full view. It was no time to stand on ceremony. I told them I knew they were indignant with me, and righteously so — and that if any aggrieved gentleman would rise in his place and abuse me for 15 minutes, I would feel better, would take it as a great kindness, and would do as much for *him* some time. That broke the ice and we went through with colors flying and drums beating. . . .

Confound the confounded cooks. Offer *five* dollars a week, and see if that won't fetch one. Advertise again.

I don't get a chance to read anything, my old darling — am patching at my lecture all the time — trying to weed Artemus out of it and work myself *in*. What *I* say, *fetches* 'em — but what *he* says — *don't*. But I'm *going* to mark Lowell for you — pity, too, to mar such dainty pages.

Bless your heart, *I* appreciate the cubbie — and shall more and more as he develops and becomes vicious and interesting. To me he is a very very dear little rip. Kiss him for me, sweetheart. I have ordered the song book for him. . . .

Sleepy!

Lovingly

SAML

A swing through upstate New York, and then on into Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. To Mark's intense vexation, a newspaper published most of his Artemus Ward lecture; by sitting up till all hours and writing furiously on the railway cars, he arrived in Chicago with a brand-new one based upon his next book, called "Roughing It." It mingled the humors of the frontier with a fine "word-painting" of his favorite bit of scenery, Lake Tahoe, on whose shore Sam the tenderfoot had staked out a timber claim and then inadvertently set the woods ablaze from his campfire. Chicago too had seen the ravages of fire. The great conflagration which began on October 9 had left the city blackened and desolate, its two-month-old scars still unhealed.

CHICAGO, Dec. 16, [1871]

My dear dear old darling, I went to bed considerably after midnight yesterday morning, got up again at 4 o'clock and went down (breakfastless) to the depot, and found, with unspeakable gladness, that there stood a sleeping car which I might have been occupying all night — but as usual nobody about the hotel or among the lecture committee knew anything *certain* about *any* train. I took a berth — the train left immediately, and of course I couldn't go to sleep. We were due here in two hours — we fooled along and got here in *eleven*

hours — 3 P.M. Could get nothing to eat, all that time. Not a vehicle at the station, nor a man or a boy. Had to carry my two satchels half a mile, to Mr. Robert Law's house, and it did seem to me they weighed a couple of tons apiece before I got through. I then ate a perfectly enormous dinner (a roast turkey and 8 gallons of Oolong tea — well it was "long" something — it was the longest tea that ever went down my throat — it was hours in passing a given point).

Then Mr. Law and I immediately hopped into his buggy and for 2 steady hours we capered among the solemn ruins, on both sides of the river — a crisp, bitter day, but all days are alike to my seal-skin coat — I can only tell it is cold by my nose and by seeing other people's actions. There is literally no Chicago *here*. I recognize *nothing* here that ever I saw before.

We sat up and talked till 10 and all went to bed. I worked till after midnight amending and altering my lecture, and then turned in and slept like a log — I don't mean a brisk, fresh, *green* log, but an old dead, soggy, *rotten* one, that never turns over or gives a yelp. All night long. Awoke 20 minutes ago — it is now 11 A.M., and there is a gentleman up yonder at the depot with a carriage, ready to receive me as I step out of the cars from Kalamazoo. I telegraphed him I would be in Chicago promptly at 11 o'clock this morning, and I have kept my word — here I *am*. But I can easily explain to him that the reason he missed me was that I mean 11 o'clock in a *general* way, and not any particular way, and that I don't blame *him* — particularly.

I shall now get up and go to Dr. Jackson's house and be his guest for 2 days. I feel perfectly *splendid*. One night's rest always renews me, restores me, makes my life and vigor perfect. I wish I could see my darling this morning, and rest her head on my breast and make her forget this dismal lecture business and its long separations. But time moves along, honey! Not so very many days yet!

With a world of love,

SAML

The new lecture, given twice in this city, proved vastly successful, as the Chicago *Evening Post* reported it, praising the skill of this "thin man of five feet ten," with "eyes that penetrate like a new gimlet" and carrot hair, who with a melancholy expression "cranes and cranes his long neck around the house like a bereaved Vermonter who has just come from the death-bed of his mother-in-law, and is looking for a sexton" — and affects enormous surprise at the audience's laughter. Another well-known journal did him great disservice, however, as he told Livy, with news that he was frantically writing another lecture. "I shall begin talking it the moment I get out of the range of the cursed Chicago *Tribune* that printed my new lecture and so made it impossible for me to talk it with any spirit

in Illinois. If these devils incarnate only appreciated what suffering they inflict with their infernal synopses, maybe they would try to have humanity enough to refrain."

The year 1872 brought both grief and joy. Little Langdon died of diphtheria, and Mark never ceased to blame himself for having neglected to keep the little fellow warmly bundled up during a morning carriage-ride, and for the cold which developed and contributed perhaps to the fatal illness. Self-reproach was always a habit of Mark Twain's tormenting conscience. But in this year a second child was born, Olivia Susan or "Susie," who in her parents' eyes soon shone a prodigy of charm and brilliance. *Roughing It* was published, and became a best-seller. To copyright it against the English pirates who had raided his earlier books, and incidentally to give some lectures in London, Mark crossed the Atlantic alone in late August. After a few weeks of public dinners, lectures, and fraternizing at the Savage Club, he came to be hailed as "the Belle of London" — a character whose unique Americanism lent savor to all he said and did.

The following letter spotlights some of his activities. He alludes first to his elder brother Orion, a kindly, bumbling ne'er-do-well who had lately lost his job with Mark Twain's publishers and had precariously landed another as a proofreader in New York City. Mark also refers to the Clemenses' Hartford neighbor, Isabella Beecher Hooker, at this time a doughty champion of woman suffrage.

LONDON, Oct. 3, [1872]

Livy darling, it is indeed pleasant to learn that Orion is happy and progressing. Now if he can only *keep* the place and continue to give satisfaction, all the better. It is no trouble for a man to get any situation he wants — by working at first for nothing — but of course to hold it firmly against all comers — after the wages begin — is the trick. . . .

Mrs. Hooker's solemn retirement from public life is news which is as grateful as it is humorous — but the tremendousness of her *reason* for retiring (because "her work is done" and her great end accomplished) surpasses the mere humanly humorous — it is the awful humor of the gods. For all these long months, this pleasant lady, under the impression that she was helping along a great and good cause, has been blandly pulling down the temple of Woman's Emancipation and shying the bricks at the builders; for all these long months she has moved sublimely among the conventions and congresses of the sex a very Spirit of Calamity; and whatsoever principle she breathed upon oratorically, perished; and whatsoever convert she took by the hand, that convert returned unto his sin again; and unto whatsoever political thing she lavished her love upon, there came sickness, and suffering, and speedy death; after all these long

months, wherein she never rested from making enemies to her cause save when she was asleep, she retires serenely from her slaughter-house and says, in effect, Let the nations sing hosannah, let the spinning spheres applaud — my work is done!

She is a good woman — she *is* a good woman — but it is so like her to do these things — she does derive such a satisfaction from everything her tangled brain conceives and her relentless hand demolishes. Well, anyway, I am glad she is out of “public life,” and I have no doubt that all of her best friends are, also.

Livy darling, I have been shopping and bought you a cloak, and if I don’t lose it I will fetch it home to you. I shall probably buy no other present while here — they are too troublesome — but after hunting London over for a present for you, I found this thing and I liked it.

Been to Oxford for a day and a half — and if you *could* only see that piece of landscape (between here and Oxford) in its summer garb, you would have to confess that there is nothing even in New England that equals it for pure loveliness, and nothing outside of New England that even remotely approaches it. And if you could see the turf in the quadrangles of some of the colleges, and the Virginian creeper that pours its cataract of green and golden and crimson leaves down a quaint old gothic tower of Magdalen College — clear from the topmost pinnacle it comes flooding down over pointed windows and battered statues, and grotesque stone faces projecting from the wall — a wasteful, graceful, gorgeous little Niagara — and whosoever looks upon it will miss his train sure. That was the darlinest, loveliest picture I ever saw.

Good-bye sweethearts, good-bye. Good-bye sweetheart, good-bye. I love you.

SAML

P.S. Mr. Tyler, of Hatch and Tyler, promised to send you your winter supply of coal — at \$7 I think. Send to him when you need it.

Returning home in November, Mark gave an occasional lecture but began no new book until February, 1873, when chance dinner-table talk between the Clemenses and their neighbors, the Charles Dudley Warners, about the stupidity of current novels, led the two wives to challenge their husbands to write a better one. In high glee they set to work over what became *The Gilded Age*. Clemens supplied the backwoods scenes and the superb character of Colonel Sellers, based upon the visionary vagaries of his Missouri cousin James Lampton. Warner furnished a conventional plot of romance, pluck and luck. In attempting to draw the *femme fatale* of the novel, Laura Hawkins, as the next letter indicates, he fell back too obviously on one of the heroines of Constance Fenimore Woolson. Also noteworthy is Mark Twain’s account of his discovery, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for July 15,

1872, of “La Grenouille Sauteuse,” a translation which he “clawed back” into literal English and later published as a postscript to his famous yarn of Calaveras County. Postmarked “Hartford,” this letter was written to Livy, who had taken Susie on a visit to Elmira.

Apr. 26, 10.30 P.M., [1873]

Livy darling, I have finished trimming and re-vamping all my MS, and to-day we began the work of critically reading the book, line by line and numbering the chapters and working them in together in their appropriate places. It is perfectly fascinating work. All of the first eleven chapters are mine, and when I came to read them right straight along without breaking, I got really interested; and when I got to Sellers’ eye-water and his clock and his fireless stove and his turnip dinner, I could hardly read for laughing. The turnip dinner is powerful good — and is satisfactory now.

Warner failed on his description of Laura as a school-girl — as a *picture* of her, I mean. He had simply copied Miss Woolson’s pretty description almost word for word — the plagiarism would have been detected in a moment. I told him so — he saw it and yet I’m hanged if he didn’t hate to lose it because there was a “nip” and pungency about that woman’s phrases that he hated to lose — and so did I, only they weren’t ours and we couldn’t take them. So I set him to create a picture and he went at it. I finally took paper and pencil, had a thought, (as to phraseology) and scratched it down. I had already told him what the *details* of the picture should be, and so only choice language was needed to dress them in. Then we read our two efforts, and mine being rather the best, we used it. And so it *ought* to have been the best. If I had been trying to describe a picture that was in *his* mind, I would have botched it.

We both think this is going to be no slouch of a novel, as Solomon said to the Hebrew Children.

Dined with Warner yesterday — at home today — lunch with Twichell noon tomorrow. The kitties are very frisky, now. They and the old cat sleep with me, nights, and have the run of the house. I wouldn’t take thousands of dollars for them. Next to a wife whom I idolise, give me cat — an *old* cat, with kittens. How is the Muggins, now, by the way? It is very melancholy here, but I don’t notice it. I’m pretty sad, but I’m used to it — it can’t phaze me. I’m an old hand at grief. Grief makes me hump myself when I’m alone, but that is taking advantages. When my family is around I am superior to it.

But I am not grieving tonight, honey. I’ve pegged away all day till this hour and done a big day’s work, and I feel as gay as a hymn.

Got a French version of the Jumping Frog — fun is no name for it. I am going to translate it *literally*, French construction and all (apologising in

parenthesis where a word is too many for me), and publish it in the *Atlantic* as the grave effort of a man who does not know but what he is as good a French scholar as there is — and sign my name to it, without another word. It will be toothsome reading.

Good-bye my darling, I love you and I love the Muggins. — It is bed time, now — I got to go down and roust out the cats.

SAML

Livy's trip to Elmira in late April, 1873, was a farewell call upon her family before she and Susie went abroad with Mark Twain in May. The Clemenses were feted in England and Scotland, took a short tour of the Continent, and came back to London for Mark's lectures in Hanover Square. When homesickness overtook Livy in the early autumn, Mark accompanied her and the child back to the United States. But with his lecture series unfinished, he returned by the next boat and plunged into two months of almost nightly public speaking at the Queen's Concert Rooms. Just after his arrival, on November 23 he wrote her the following letter. His old friend of San Francisco days, the poet Charles Warren Stoddard, was now acting as his secretary.

[LONDON,] *Sunday*, [Nov. 23, 1873]

Sweetheart, it is a rather handsome day for London — very sunny and bright and cheery, and I heartily wish you were here to enjoy it. Stoddard and I walked through Regent's Park and up on top of Primrose Hill and back again.

Stoddard has been spending some days at Oxford with the students, and they swear that if I will come there and lecture they will entertain me like a duke, and will also cram the largest hall in the town, for me. — I would like it — and at a *lecture* they would come in evening dress and behave with the utmost decorum — with that thorough and complete decorum which noblemen's sons know so well how to practise when they choose — but at a common theatre what a queer lot they are! — and how they do behave, these scions of the bluest aristocratic blood of Great Britain! Stoddard attended the theatre there — a company of traveling actors. The house was full — both sexes — and all the students were there — or at least several hundred of them. They wore their hats all through the performance, and they all smoked pipes and cigars. Every individual devil of them had on an Ulster overcoat like mine, that came down to his heels; and every rascal of them brought a bull pup or a terrier pup under his arm, and they would set those creatures up on the broad-topped balustrades, and allow them to amuse themselves by barking at anybody or anything they chose to. Some Davenport Brothers tied themselves up with ropes, and people were requested to come on the stage and

examine the trick; whereupon, several students, in their long coats, their hats on, their pups under their arms and their pipes in their mouths, stepped out over the balustrades of private boxes, and gravely sauntered around and around the tied man on the stage examining the knots and expressing their opinions — and the audience never smiled or said a word but took the whole thing as a matter of course. . . .

SAML

From the steady stream of letters that flowed until his sailing for home on January 13, 1874 — filled with nostalgia which the whirl of activities could not banish — the following is typical.

LONDON, Jan. 2, [1874]

Livy my darling, I want you to be sure and remember to have in the bathroom, when I arrive, a bottle of Scotch whisky, a lemon, some crushed sugar, and a bottle of *Angostura Bitters*. Ever since I have been in London I have taken in a wine-glass what is called a cock-tail (made with those ingredients) before breakfast, before dinner, and just before going to bed. It was recommended by the surgeon of the "City of Chester" and was a most happy thought. To it I attribute the fact that up to this day my digestion has been wonderful — simply *perfect*. It remains day after day and week after week as regular as a clock. Now my dear, if you will give the order *now*, to have those things put in the bath-room and left there till I come, they will *be* there when I arrive. Will you? I love to write about arriving — it seems as if it were to be tomorrow. And I love to picture myself ringing the bell, at midnight — then a pause of a second or two — then the turning of the bolt, and "Who is it?" — then ever so many kisses — then you and I in the bath-room, I drinking my cock-tail and undressing, and you standing by — then to bed, and — everything happy and jolly as it should be. I *do* love and honor you, my darling.

SAML

Nothing but *Angostura Bitters* will do.

Samuel Clemens the devoted father appears in scores of unpublished letters written to his daughters. From childhood they too were lapped in that mantle of playful affection, drollery, and chivalry with which their mother had long since been invested. To Susie and her baby sister Clara ("Bay"), who were spending the summer at Quarry Farm, he wrote the following note from New York — on his way to Hartford to investigate a suspicious character reported hanging around the house (he turned out to be the second maid's furtive but recalcitrant beau, who married the girl when Mark dramatically produced the license and the Reverend Joseph Twichell and a two-hundred-dollar check as wedding present).

Monday A.M.

Susie dear, you and Rosa and Bay must keep a sharp lookout on the young birdlings up at the pond and see them begin life. They are ready to fly, now. Keep the squirrel supplied with nuts, if he comes around. If you have a very fine sunset, put a blanket over it and keep it till I come. Aunt Sue will give you one. I saw a lovely sunset yesterday, reflected in the water of New Jersey marshes. It was a beautiful, still evening — no sound but just one cow singing, and some frogs — (frosches.)

There are some bells close here and a man who rings chimes. That man will die some day, and then he will wish he had behaved himself. I saw a cat yesterday, with 4 legs — and yet it was only a yellow cat, and rather small, too, for its size. They were not *all* fore legs — several of them were hind legs; indeed almost a majority of them were.

Write me.

PAPA

A third daughter, Jean, was born in 1880, and the same tender affection was lavished upon her. These years brought little save happiness to the Clemens family, and increasing fame to its senior member — as he published successively *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Life on the Mississippi*. In the winter of 1884–1885 he undertook a joint lecture tour with George W. Cable, from which Mark Twain wrote daily letters home. He called on General Grant in New York to urge completion of his memoirs, and by special request dropped in to see President-elect Grover Cleveland at the Governor's mansion in Albany: "I sat on four electric bells (as the cats used to do at the farm) and summoned four page boys whom nobody had any use for." He also visited his boyhood Hannibal ("you can never imagine the infinite great deeps of pathos that have rolled their tides over me"), and in Keokuk found that his mother, aged eighty-two, "is her old beautiful self." At South Bend his friend Stoddard turned up for the lecture in company with the president of Notre Dame. "Did I tell you, Stoddard is Professor of Literature there?" Mark wrote Livy. "He says they don't require that the Professor of Literature shall know how to spell. Charley can't spell any better than Jean." In late January, Livy wrote to him: "This letter will reach you not far from our anniversaries. . . . Fifteen years married, sixteen years engaged. And I do love you just a scrap even now. I don't much fancy having you away on our anniversaries. . . . Good-bye Youth, *I love you with my whole heart.*"

Mid-February found him in Toronto, both for lecturing and for the securing in person of his Canadian copyright on *Huckleberry Finn*.

(The End)

TORONTO, Feb. 15, 1885

Livy darling, I did not get a chance to write yesterday — first omission for a long time. A sleigh called for us early and took us out 2½ miles to a Young Ladies' College and there each of us wrote 74 autographs in the midst of the pack of girls representing them; then we all went out on the hill — thermometer 12 below zero, and went tobogganing. It is tremendous sport, and no danger. You sit in the midst of a row of girls on a long broad board with its front end curled up, and away you go, like lightning. Climbing back up the hill through deep snow with a thin crust on it is not fun, and in fact it was very fatiguing. Still the sport was so prodigiously exciting and entertaining that it was well for us it was cut short by a telephonic message that the train was being held for us; otherwise we should have tired ourselves clear to death. I had my shoes full of snow and was wet to my knees when we left. . . .

SAML

The year 1885, which saw the whole English-speaking world reading *Huckleberry Finn*, his greatest book, may be taken as the crest of Mark Twain's powers as creative artist. Later seasons would bring the slow ebbing of his genius, together with the thickening shadows of financial disaster, and deaths in the ranks of those he dearly loved. In retrospect, the mid-eighties would seem the golden era of his happiness and achievement, although the onset of time and sorrow did no more than deepen his affection for the woman who shared his life. On her fortieth birthday and the seventeenth anniversary of their secret engagement, November 27, 1885, he was at home, but wrote her one of those little *billets doux* which Livy preserved among the bundles and bundles of letters he had sent her over the years.

HARTFORD, Nov. 27, 1885

We have reached another milestone, my darling, and a very, very remote one from the place whence we started; but we look back over a pleasant landscape — valleys that are still green, plains that still bear flowers, hills that still sleep in the soft light of that far morning of blessed memory. And here we have company on the journey — ah, such precious company, such inspiring, such lovely, and gracious company! and how they lighten the march! Our faces are toward the sunset, now, but these are with us, to hold our hands, and stay our feet, and while they abide, and our old love grows and never diminishes, our march shall still be through flowers and green fields, and the evening light as pleasant as that old soft morning glow yonder behind.

YOUR HUSBAND



THE LADY AND THE UNICORN

(After seeing the sixth of the Cluny Tapestries, known as "La Dame à la Licorne")

by MAY SARTON

I AM the unicorn and bow my head
You are the lady woven into history
And here forever we are bound in mystery
Our wine, Imagination, and our bread,
And I the unicorn who bows his head.

You are all interwoven in my history
And you and I have been most strangely wed
I am the unicorn and bow my head
And lay my wildness down upon your knee
You are the lady woven into history.

And here forever we are sweetly wed
With flowers and rabbits in the tapestry
You are the lady woven into history;
Imagination is our bridal bed;
We lie ghostly upon it, no word said.

Among the flowers of the tapestry
I am the unicorn and by your bed
Come gently, gently to bow down my head,
Lay at your side this love, this mystery
And call you lady of my tapestry.

I am the unicorn and bow my head
To one so sweetly lost, so strangely wed:

You sit forever under a small formal tree
Where I forever search your eyes to be

Rewarded with this shining of our tragedy
And know your beauty was not cast for me,

Know we are woven all in mystery,
The wound imagined where no one has bled,

My wild love chastened to this history
Where I, before your eyes, bow down my head.



PHILIP WYLIE is an American novelist and critic with a prose that cracks like a whip. Since he intended to become a doctor, his education was largely scientific. But he left Princeton at the end of three years to work as a press agent, then as one of the editors of the *New Yorker* and as a film writer. Later he became a free lance, traveling extensively in Europe and Russia and making his headquarters in Florida, where most of his writing is done.

SAFE AND INSANE

by PHILIP WYLIE

I

THE past fifty years of what we call civilization have utterly ruined childhood. The automobile, by restricting children to the yard or the block, by conditioning their very impulse to chase a ball, and by hooting at them like a beast whenever they appear on the margins of its sacred raceways, has taken away their last rights. The city itself is, of course, no place for children. Today the millionaire's son is as much immured as the child in Victorian slums; perhaps the chauffeur drives him to and from school, but he is walled in by the hooting iron and is altogether cut off from Nature.

The needs of children are perfectly described by those recent psychological discoveries which show that the development of each person follows the evolution of the entire species. The infant is the instinctual animal; the tot, a savage with the savage's fears, curiosities, unwitting cruelties, and naïveté; the grade pupil is the advancing barbarian, full of lawless enterprises, excitements, rituals, outdoor achievement, and tribal activity; the adolescent is the medieval mystic; after him comes the adult — if all the other stages have been thoroughly experienced and assimilated. But in the modern city, suburb, town, and even to a great extent in the village, the child has been deprived of any normal opportunity to engage in these cultural phases.

There is no adequate way for children to wage war against this fierce and universal imprisonment. Their parents try increasingly to barricade them from perils, to fence up their schoolyards, and to hire more supervisors for them, more life guards, more cops at corners, more counselors at camp. Their own so-called adult properties and interests constantly militate against childhood necessities. Their very working hours and pastimes make children a handicap rather than an interest. Indeed, the American child is impounded as soon as it can crawl in what is wretchedly called a play pen — a con-

venience to every mother which keeps the tot from chewing through electric wires and the like, but which frustrates its every vital instinct.

The expression of natural instincts in towns and cities, limited to the unnatural material at hand, is necessarily of an "illegal" nature. In open country — woods, fields, farms, lakesides — the world is every child's oyster. In towns and cities, everything is "owned" save that which lies in the gutter. This presents the child with total dilemma, total frustration. His environment ought to belong to him and he ought to be a free agent in it. But if he even takes the bark off a tree to make a miniature boat to float in a pool, the urban child destroys somebody's birch, his dad has to pay, and the old lady who owns the goldfish pond has him chased by policemen.

The rebellion of city children naturally takes the form of property destruction, for property has become their enemy instead of their friend. They steal from stores; they steal cars; they smash windows; they set fires; they interfere with traffic; they damage trees and public benches; they paint brick walls and iron deer. Most of these are enterprises in which I, myself, have engaged. Generally, I was not caught; when I was caught, my family could pay. But the children of families who cannot pay, when caught in such activities and others analogous, are known as juvenile delinquents, taken before judges, sent to reform schools, and cemented into criminal habits.

Such rebellion, however, is merely a negative act which expresses resentment over the fact that the child has been deprived of all suitable opportunity to practice his impulses. The child of modern civilization takes his real revenge — or makes his compensation — when he has shaken off the trap of youth and has become, legally at any rate, an adult. The great majority of Americans alive today are preoccupied with such acts of revenge and com-

pensation. They are performed in three principal categories, besides outright criminality.

The overweening passion of grown Americans for games, play, pleasures, and vicarious sports via stadiums, ball parks, radio, movies, and newspapers is the first great evidence of misspent — or, rather, unspent — childhoods. The second is the aggressive, hostile, irresponsible exploitation seen so commonly in businessmen — the littlest along with the greatest. Disguised as “go-getters,” “individualists,” “builders,” and “progressives,” they usurp as much power as they can, with total disregard for human welfare — as a revenge for and a protection against the damage society did them in childhood. They feel that by becoming owners they can make up for having lived for many years amidst universal deprivation. The third category results from a complete ruin of the adult by the distortions of childhood environment, and in it are some 20 per cent of the population: the hopeless neurotics and the insane. These people are popularly supposed to be unable to face the grown-up world; actually, they are unable to face the terrible destitutions of their childhood.

Children have been sacrificed to “civilization” as much as if they had been poured by millions into the belly of a red-hot idol. The cost, as any good psychologist would expect, is to be found in the national pall of adult infantilism and regression. Most adults remain children all their lives, often even those who are known as statesmen, senators, generals, admirals, and industrial tycoons.

The life of a child ought to be a process of adventure, experience, and exploit, graduated upward to suit his rising consciousness — which, as I have said, follows the unfolding pattern of all instinct. In this process, if he is to become truly adult and thus mentally and emotionally secure, he must make contact with the evolutionary experiences of his forebears, for only thus can his emotions mature and only thus can he get a biological sense of those fundamentals of human life and society which sustain civilization even at its most citified summits. But instead of aiding and abetting this procedure, we have done everything we can think of to shield and protect our children from the facts of life.

2

ALL my adult life I have been appalled at the absence of basic experience in my associates. They think they know what they are doing, but they live in a world of dreams; and the very fact of their ignorances inevitably fills them with enormous hostilities and with immense insecurities.

I have met countless people who are active in various health, hospital, welfare, and hygiene societies, but who have never seen a chicken killed or a kitten born. They cross the Atlantic, but they cannot swim. They have slept in hotels in Cairo

and Bombay but never in the woods. They drive to the top of Pikes Peak, but they have never shinned a tree or climbed a cliff. They install automatic heating plants in their homes and air-conditioning in their offices, but they could not be trusted to burn trash in a back yard. They make ice in their kitchens, but they have never skated or skied or snowshoed. They eat all their lives, and wear carnations and orchids, but they have never planted a seed or raised a crop.

Now, these people, for all their wonderful accomplishments, such as the atom bomb, are not really conscious, because they have had no true primary experiences in life. They do not know what it is like to feel alive or to be alive. All of them are terribly frightened of their civilization. Their fears run from an entirely rational anxiety about crossing their own streets to the equally rational panic over the possibility that they may get into another war. Such fears, of course, make them aggressive — which greatly increases the chances of wars. They vacillate between worry and escapist work and play. They are, that is, supremely childish.

Communism and fascism, from this point of view, merely represent attempts to manage the increasingly infantile behavior of all people in our increasingly industrial societies. They are systems of treating adults as permanent children — of making the state into a universal father and mother; systems of ruling populations by absolute authority (by cajolery on the one hand and physical punishment on the other) not only over the activities of every individual but over his mind and his emotions as well. And the more childish we Americans become in compensation for our destruction of American childhood, the more vulnerable we become to some form of state absolutism.

Most of this change took place in my own lifetime, and today most parents are themselves the products of the sort of background I have described. The fears they feel concerning the world they do know are projected ignorantly, hence doubly, upon that normal, real, and natural childhood environment of which they lack the knowledge. Thus they keep eliminating, forbidding, and discouraging the very sorts of activity which are essential for youngsters. This is done in the name of safety and sanity. Its purpose is to protect the young from danger and from shock — such shock, that is, as would upset these very unstable and subnormal adults. Actually, of course, the adult world is more terribly dangerous than it ever was in history. Actually, ignorance itself is dangerous, and the only hope of security lies always in understanding. And actually, of course, it is dangerous every minute to be alive anywhere at any time.

A normal childhood is normally dangerous. It is only through an experience of dangers, graduated to his age, that any child can grow up emotionally. Excessive protection is, for him, famine. A real

adult will have real self-reliance and true independence, and will be deeply trustworthy, only if he has successfully passed through a great many experiences in which his own mistake could have caused his serious injury or even his death. A human being who has never had such experiences is likely, for instance, to be unqualified even to drive an automobile, since it represents the constant equation of "error equals injury and death." However, for the sake of adult convenience, of adult "freedom from worry" — and because of the projection of adult neurosis on childhood — safety and protection have been legislated into childhood to a degree that is murderous of adult personality. Not only are the unnatural restrictions of the city and town placed upon the youngster, but to them are added all the sickly prejudices, squeamishnesses, and ignorant dreads of the average urban parent.

Our "safe and sane" Fourth of July is an example. It is true that fireworks used to maim and kill children. Not many — as child-killing goes in this nation — but a few. There are, however, no statistics to show how many children who would have been maimed and killed because of their ignorance, poor instruction, untrained recklessness, and general incompetence in using fireworks were saved by the ban. Quite likely, the majority of all such still do get maimed and killed from other causes: falling off the backs of hopped trucks, setting fire to themselves, drowning, and other little dooms that are reserved for the ignorant, stupid, overreckless, and incompetent among youngsters as amongst us all.

The institution of the "quiet Fourth" destroyed the greatest and most emotionally potent national fiesta America ever had. Its ceremony was handed down through generations. My father saluted sunrise on Independence Day with a brass cannon charged and fired by himself. He worked and saved to set rockets spattering the high dark of every July Fourth night. Bands, parades, and oratory were part of the celebration and they tied his emotions, by music, sights, and words, to the stirring deeds of his Revolutionary forebears. But the seal on that relationship was made by Father's own loud, glamorous, explosive *participation* in the proudest and most important memory we Americans possess.

I was taught, at a very early age, to shoot off fireworks. Little fireworks at first, big ones in later years, and rockets and Roman candles when I was ten. The Fourth of July was the day of my greatest boyhood independence. I was allowed by public sanction to help wake up the whole town at the crack of dawn. I was permitted all day to make as much noise as I pleased. At night, it was my privilege to play gorgeously with fire. Instinct, tribal custom, fundamental human culture, here bound me gloriously to a supreme tradition of the fight of a bold people for liberty. In the whole

adventure of being a boy there is no event so altogether satisfactory as a proper Fourth of July; the ritual is primitive and valuable beyond price.

When I was twelve, we moved to another State and the Fourth of July became a Boy Scout parade in hot uniforms, a lot of speeches, formal wreath-laying — in, of all places for such a day, the cemetery! — a long walk home, a late dinner, and fireworks distantly viewed that evening in a park.

In my thirteenth year, I accidentally discovered at a public library in this benighted State a book which told how to make black powder. I was not permitted by the librarian to take out this book on my card; so, naturally, I took it out under my coat — for good. In three different drugstores I purchased sulphur "for the roses," potassium nitrate "for the plants," and powdered charcoal "for dad's indigestion." These, when mixed according to directions, gave off a fine flash. I then made a cannon by boring an oak block in the manual training shop, loaded it with my powder, packed it with toilet paper and blue stone from the driveway, and touched it off by lighting a newspaper.

The first explosion was slow but fiery. After further reading, however, I caught on to such ingredients as potassium chlorate — then in use as a gargle — tannic acid, and other substances. And my extreme delight can be imagined when, one day, the charge in my gun gave a mighty bang and the chipped stones smashed several cellar windows in the house next door. Father paid for the windows.

Chapters from the story of my childhood usually cause my present friends and acquaintances to gasp with anxiety or even to snort with unbelief. Of what they consider perils and hardships, onerous duties and inordinate responsibilities, I had a far greater share than most of my friends. My busy parents let me go my way — even urged me to take chances when I was reluctant; but they saw to it, first, that I had the knowledge and the disciplines necessary for the undertakings. That is the point. I lived a great deal in the out-of-doors when I was young — and that is where all mankind lived for a million years and until the few last unsatisfactory thousands of years.

I should like to point out to every protective mother and father that, while I got hurt many times — cut, skinned, bruised, sprained, and so on — through independent acts, the most careful supervision failed to spare me from harm. My worst burn was sustained when, a baby in my mother's arms, I reached out as she stirred jam stewing on a wood stove and pressed my hand into its white-hot surface. My worst hurt occurred when I was about four and my grandmother was bathing me, standing, in a washbowl; somehow she let me fall. And the closest I ever came to death — during any protracted period — resulted from a bellyache for which my parents innocently called an old-fashioned osteopath. On three successive days he

treated, by kneading, what had been from the start a ruptured appendix. I sustained my only severe fracture during a school gym period.

3

A GREAT deal of attention has been paid by psychologists to the early sex training of children. Freud's discoveries have shown how crazily we behave in this dominant aspect of life. But it is only part of the background of childhood, one facet in the direct contact with Nature which the child requires. Sex difficulties, of a certainty, are the commonest expression of our modern human incompetence. But beneath them lies the fact that the form and purpose of the last few millenniums of man's development have been increasingly hostile to every opportunity for natural childhood.

Modern educators have followed the lead of modern psychologists and have attempted to set up systems which would give room for the development of the child's ego in relation to its playmates and to mother-child-father situations. In some schools, all formal discipline has been abandoned to "liberate" young personalities. This is futile. The one discipline which the child is emotionally equipped to learn, and indeed must know to live successfully as an adult, is the natural discipline of cause and effect — the perfect honesty of Nature and the absolute inviolability of its laws. For in natural law is the basis of all human morality; but because it can be assimilated only through experience, we regularly observe — with absurd regret — that there seems to be no other way by which each generation can learn anything. The regret is absurd simply because it arises from our fallacious notion that somehow civilization could or should reach the child vicariously, without risk to it or worry or bother to its parents.

The fact is that nearly all the properties, buildings, streets, machines, gadgets, higher courses of learning, governments, armies, navies, weapons, monetary systems, and other "advanced" aspects of civilization are superficial to *life*. Indeed, people who lack them all seem to be both wiser and more contented than the average American. To a child, these things are *totally* superficial — wretched excrescences that filch his necessary environs and replace them with deadly walls. To think, as parents do, that children can be morally educated and emotionally prepared for maturity in such a setting, and by means which substitute, at best, supervised samplings of natural life for the child-long experience of it, is like thinking that a man could be prepared to live on Mars by occasional squints at the stars.

Essays such as this are, by "civilized" custom, supposed to conclude with neat plans to solve any difficulties or problems which they present. Obvi-

ously, the cardinal idea here implied is that the entire way of life of Western man is wrong and has been wrong since before Greece and Rome. The reader, granting my premises, will hardly feel equipped to set out to arrest and redirect a process in being for thousands of years. Yet the reader, if a parent, can do precisely that within the limits of one family and perhaps with good effect on several families.

He can do it by understanding the true needs of childhood, by realizing that the needs are "rights," and by serving those rights above and beyond all other rights. Parents have no right, for example, to live in cities if they can possibly live outside them. Children have the right to observe and experience every fact of Nature — animal, mineral, and vegetable. They have a right to learn to be, step by step, independently able to live in natural environments. They have a right to take on such responsibilities as their age makes possible. They have a right to learn such truths and consequences as their emotional development permits, in environs that are not property — environs where they can dig, pluck, hoard, build, saw, cut, walk, swim, chop, paint, paddle, and pole without let or hindrance; environs where their normal impulse is neither inhibited by blue-jacketed guardians of every object nor confined by the artificial hazard of rushing, iron monstrosities. Children have the right to take, every day, such natural risks as their teaching in Nature gives them the competence to face.

Only that adult who is able to live successfully in a primitive world can bring enough knowledge and experience to civilized living to make it worth while. Without a realistic childhood background, he (or she) is a mere gadget himself. And a human being is not designed to be a by-product of a pile of buildings and a slew of machines or a parasite upon them.

I know that some readers, anxious mothers, will think this is a ghastly theory, and that I have never had charge of a child. The fact is, my brother and sister and I did most of the "bringing up" of our much younger half-brother and half-sister. The fact is that, as I write, my own daughter, who is fourteen, has just recovered from a badly broken arm which she sustained while riding a rough horse — I spent part of last summer encouraging her to ride by riding with her. I swam with her in "shark-infested waters," too, last summer. And when I found that she had gone swimming alone over the Bahaman coral reefs, it gave me quite a turn. "I came in," she said, "when I looked down and saw an enormous purple sting ray right underneath me."

The reader will see that I have taught her to be prudent. And a few readers, perhaps, may see that my daughter has a good opportunity of growing up into a person with some experience of Nature — and a fair quantity of self-reliance. Such, anyhow, is my hope for her.



An Atlantic "First"

A STORY



As with so many of his generation, EDWARD K. MORRIS had to wait until the war was over before he could begin to write. Commissioned in the U.S. Submarine Service, he saw sea duty for a year and a half on the S-34. At the war's end he married, went back to studying under the GI Bill (concentrating in English), taught for a year at the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia, and then turned free lance.

ACTION AT SALANO BAY

by EDWARD K. MORRIS

WE rolled heavily all night. A big sea would catch us and toss the bow toward the stars, leaving half the boat hanging in mid-air. In a half-dream I felt the bow fall back into the trough of the sea — fall and fall. I awoke at that moment.

Something had gone wrong, I thought; we must be diving out of control. In terror I lifted my head from the pillow. The boat was practically standing on end now, and I clutched the bunk rail to keep from sliding into the bulkhead. Dishes broke loose somewhere in the galley. They crashed to the deck and rolled and scattered down the passageway.

I laughed nervously at the confusion, and then I felt the whole boat shudder as it buried its nose in the next sea. I dropped my head back on the pillow and lay there with my heart pounding. I could hear the muffled crash of water tearing at the superstructure. In my mind I could see the men on the bridge turning their backs to that blast of cold spray, grasping a rail to hold against the tug of solid water round their feet, grinning crazily at one another in the darkness and cursing.

I relaxed my grip on the bunk rail and rolled over on my side. The nightmare gone, I could once more hear the pounding of the engines aft and smell the battery gas that made the air thick and nauseating.

In the passageway a red light glowed dimly. I closed my eyes, spread my arms and legs to brace against the sea, and fell asleep again.

Half an hour later I woke with a start, the rasp of the diving klaxon burning in my ears.

"DIVE!" screamed a voice from the Control Room.

"Dive! . . . Dive! . . . Dive! . . ." The order echoed back through each compartment.

The deck tilted forward. Air screeched from the vents, deafening. I could feel the motors throb as they pushed the ship down into the sea. From above came the sound of water swishing across the deserted deck.

I sat up on the edge of the bunk and ran my fingers through my hair. It felt greasy and damp. I dug a fingernail into a spot that itched.

Our down angle increased, and I leaned to one side, away from the tilt of the boat. We were going under now, and I could visualize the ship, a long black cylinder trailing bubbles as it sank weirdly into the cold sea. The slosh of water above grew indistinct, and the boat rolled more sluggishly. In a moment the conning tower would disappear beneath the waves. A sea swept over us, and the propellers broke water. They raced and bit in again, leaving a foaming patch on the ocean surface.

In the half-light I reached out and groped about the top of the desk for a cigarette. Just diving for daylight, I supposed, but it was odd that they hadn't shifted from red to white lighting below decks.

We were under now, scarcely rolling at all. They stopped the motors to shift the battery combination, and with this load off the electrical system, the dim red light in the passageway shone more brightly.

A hush fell over the boat. I felt as though I

were sealed in an underwater coffin with dead men all around me as we rocked to the motion of the sea. Only one sound broke the stillness — a diving-plane shaft overhead. It revolved with a creaking noise, then clicked to a stop, then started up again, aimlessly, like the helm of a derelict.

A ringing bell interrupted the silence. I heard someone running in the after compartment and then a heavy crash as he threw in the main circuit breakers. The motors began to throb again, the ship to vibrate.

I blew out a lungful of smoke and coughed. My head felt thick and hot. My mouth tasted of battery gas and Diesel oil. I longed to be up on the surface where a cold wind could blow through my sticky, sweaty clothes.

"BATTLE STATIONS SUBMERGED!"

The cry broke my reverie. I pulled my belt tight. My sandals — where the hell? I found them and jammed my feet in.

I dove for the passageway and collided with a man running aft.

"Maybe something this time — by God . . ."

His words trailed off as he recovered balance and lurched on.

I ducked through the forward door into the Control Room. They were just shifting to white light now, and it blinded me. I stumbled over to the chart desk and leaned against it, trying to see. It was quiet in the Control Room. The men sat there tight-lipped, watching dials and gauges, pushing control levers, turning valves.

I could see better now. The periscope was up, but no light came from its eyepiece. We must have gone too deep. I glanced at a depth gauge — seventy feet.

The Captain stood resting his elbows on the periscope handles, head in his hands. Then he looked up at the Diving Officer, his face a picture of exasperation. "Well, Roscoe," he said deliberately, "the one time I really want to see something, you duck me."

"Sorry, Captain. We're heavy as hell this morning."

"Oh, get me up, damn it!" roared the Captain. "Come on, Roscoe, get me up where I can see something."

2

I STEPPED through the forward door and into the Wardroom, a plywood-paneled compartment the size of a Pullman section.

Walker was already there, sitting bent over the table. He was a leathery-faced man, tall and thin. With his stubble beard he looked weather-beaten. "All set," he said, looking up.

I slid into the seat opposite him and glanced down at the table. Everything was ready: plotting board, pencils, dividers, rulers. Walker and

I worked there in the Wardroom during attacks, trying to plot enemy course and speed from the jumble of data that came out of the loud-speaker on the bulkhead.

I reached over and flicked on the Silex heater switch.

"Plot?" came a voice from the speaker. "Plot?"

"Tell them we're ready, Walk."

Walker put his mouth to the speaker and pressed the talk-bulk switch. "Plot manned and ready," he said.

"Aye," came the voice.

Walker pulled off a ragged blue sweater.

"Just come off watch?"

"Yeah," said Walker. "What a watch. We'd get down in those troughs — my God! You'd look up at a black mass coming at you and couldn't believe it was a wave."

"Big, eh?"

"Big?" He grunted. "My God! You could look up at it forty feet above you. And then we'd heel over on our side, and you were looking right out sideways at the stars."

I shook my head. "Where are we, Walk?"

"Near Salano Bay. Captain said we were going in there today to get a rest from this sea."

I looked at my watch. Six-thirty — just getting light. "Why the battle stations?" I asked.

"Lookout thought he saw something in the bay."

"Ship?"

"Maybe."

I rolled back my shirt sleeves. Walker tossed a package of cigarettes on the table, and we each took one.

"How's to get two coffee cups from that rack?" I said.

Walker set the cups on a corner of the plotting board, and I filled them from the Silex. I took a swallow of coffee and glanced up at the Wardroom depth gauge. Fifty feet — periscope depth.

"Turn up the speaker, Walk."

He turned the volume control. We would be able to hear every word the Captain said, for the Control Room speaker was on the overhead just above the periscopes. The other compartments could be heard only when they called the Control Room.

"... try it again," came the voice. "Up periscope."

The periscope head would be breaking the surface now, tossing out a little feather of water on either side.

I picked up a pencil and centered the movable-arm ruler on the plotting board.

"Jesus!" squawked the voice.

A pause. Then, "One destroyer patrolling outside the entrance. Another fueling from a tanker in the bay."

Walker and I stared at each other.

"Down periscope," came the voice again. "Make ready the bow tubes."

With my pencil I began to sketch meaningless little designs along the edge of the plotting sheet.

"We're going in for a shot at the two in the bay," the Captain said.

I could hear air rushing through a pipeline overhead, air going forward to the torpedo tubes.

We took a down angle, and I watched the depth gauge. Sixty feet . . . ninety feet (the ship began to vibrate) . . . one hundred and twenty feet.

"Level off at a hundred and fifty," said the Captain.

The angle eased. The depth needle quivered at one hundred and fifty feet.

We ran on for ten minutes . . . twenty minutes. I shaded in the designs I had drawn. Walker poured another cup of coffee.

"Seventy feet," ordered the voice.

The ship began to climb again, and I wondered how we looked from the outside. Ghostly perhaps. A black mass rising up through the water — a huge sea animal, silent and blind.

"Fifty feet. Up periscope."

I put down my pencil.

"Okay, Roscoe, take her down to seventy feet again. We'll sneak in while that other destroyer's headed out on her patrol run."

The depth needle came to seventy feet once more.

"All ahead one third," said the speaker.

The ship ceased to vibrate; we crept through the water.

"Shut the watertight doors," came the order.

A door outside the Wardroom crashed shut. The ventilation blower stopped. Silence. Just the hum of the speaker.

"I wonder if he's thought about getting out again," said Walker.

I picked up the pencil and sketched new designs on the plotting sheet. "You know about the charts for this bay?" I asked.

Walker nodded. "Unreliable," he said.

I tried to picture the mouth of the bay. Sheer cliffs and a gray sea pounding at their base. Morning fog hanging a hundred feet overhead.

Our rolling stopped completely: we were going in now. But how far off the bottom? Two hundred feet? One hundred feet? Fifty feet? Or were we running along in an underwater valley — black rock masses on either side and a sub-sea cliff dead ahead. Even at one-third speed we would crush the Torpedo Room back into itself. Then lights out and a rush of icy water.

"Up periscope."

I swept the ruler onto the middle of the plotting board and waited for information.

"Nothing for you, Plot. They're anchored. We'll be firing in a second. Stand by forward."

I looked at Walker.

"Oh, Christ!" swore the Captain. "That destroyer's getting under way. They must have heard us."

Ten seconds silence. What was he thinking?

"We'll fire anyway. Stand by . . . stand by." The voice grew tense. "Stand by. . . . Fire One!"

The ship bucked back.

"Fire Two!"

The whole boat shook.

"Fire Three! Fire Four!"

We took an up angle.

"Don't broach now, Roscoe. Right full rudder!"

I sat rigidly, hands clasped to the edge of the table.

"All ahead full!"

The boat heeled over. And then the sea hit us several stunning blows. Three explosions close together, as all but one torpedo detonated. The table chattered on its legs, and dust filled the air. Up above, water tore noisily through the superstructure.

"My God," said Walker. "My God!"

The tanker's fuel oil must have exploded at that moment. I felt as though someone had hit me over the head. The water outside rumbled and hissed.

Then, suddenly, the boat jarred against something. Two or three jolts, and we settled on an up angle. The collision siren screamed out, screamed like the voices of hell in that hollow compartment.

"We're aground!" I yelled at Walker. "Aground!"

"What?" He couldn't hear me.

I heard the Captain shout, "Stop that damned siren!"

The scream died into silence, and we sat there, the Wardroom tilted up like a crazy-house.

Up periscope." The words were quick and terse.

Methodically, Walker reached out and righted a cup that had spilled coffee across the plotting board.

"Damn!" said the speaker. "We've run up on a ledge. The bow's half out of water!"

The captain would be walking the periscope around now, looking for the destroyer . . . looking for . . .

"Oh, God! We didn't get the destroyer!"

The voice rose, excited. "He sees us! He's coming in to ram! Blow, Roscoe! Blow!"

Confusion poured from the speaker. Petrified, I listened. I could hear Roscoe shouting above the din.

"Blow Number Three Main Ballast!"

"Blow Two!"

"Blow After Trim Tank!"

And then a voice of quiet resignation. "I've

never seen a ship that close. He's going to hit us . . . he's going to . . ."

With a lurch the boat upended.

"Look out!"

"Look out!" Walker was yelling in my face.

The Wardroom took a horrible angle. Walker was somewhere above me, hanging over the table.

The plotting board slid off and pinned me back against the seat. The Silex broke loose and crashed into the bulkhead, splattering coffee everywhere.

"Flood!" urged the voice. "Flood, Roscoe!"

I looked for the depth gauge. There it was — up by Walker. One hundred feet!

"Walker! Walker, the depth gauge!"

I pointed with one hand, trying to push the plotting board away with the other. "Walker! They didn't ram us! We're off the ledge!"

The angle increased. One hundred and fifty feet. We were sinking fast.

Roscoe had lost control — the thought flashed across my mind.

"Roscoe," coached the Captain's voice, "Roscoe, you'd better take the angle off the boat if you want to go home."

The propellers were going full ahead. The deck heaved and shuddered. Still we slid down — stern first. I stopped struggling with the plotting board and watched the depth gauge.

The two-hundred-foot numbers were painted red — maximum safe depth. The moving pointer passed the two-hundred-foot mark.

Emptiness clawed at my stomach.

Two hundred and fifty feet.

"Why doesn't he blow?"

Then we hit bottom. The rest of the coffee cups crashed about me. A grinding noise aft, and we settled on our side.

Silence.

The voice laughed oddly.

"Let's stay here and rest up, Roscoe. Flood her down."

I pushed the plotting board back on the table.

Walker was doing something strange. He was trying to light a cigarette, but his hands shook so violently that he couldn't get it started. Little beads of sweat stood out on his upper lip.

4

ELBOWS on the table, I buried my face in my hands. My heart pounded. I felt, somehow, as though I were outside of myself, watching all this in a dream.

Off in the distance the first string of depth charges let go.

The next string was closer.

Then I heard a ship pass overhead, rumbling like a subway train.

"This is going to be close," Walker said slowly, and he gripped the side of the plotting board.

I sat staring. I was thinking of those charges slipping quietly down through the water, and of the sudden explosion and the pressure that would cave in our hull. The air in the boat would make a fantastic great bubble that would balloon to the surface, and then smaller bubbles would trail up behind, pretty and sparkling and silent.

A metallic click, and the charges detonated.

I was stunned; struck in the face.

Paint chips floated down onto the table.

Click — another charge. The boat jarred. A piece of cork fell from the overhead.

I tried to stand up. "The Control Room!" I shouted.

The next explosion knocked me back on the seat.

I struggled up again. "I'm going into the Control Room!"

Click —

The overhead light shattered. Glass showered over my head. I slumped down on the seat exhausted. I sat there in the darkness, my pulse pounding. My brow felt wet. "The emergency light," I choked out. "Walk, the light!"

A fresh string of charges let go close by. The boat rocked slightly. Something crashed to the deck beside me.

Walker found the battle lantern switch and turned it on. The pale beam pushed through the darkness to the opposite bulkhead. Dust floated through the sickly ray of light.

"Motor Room?" the speaker voice questioned. "Motor Room?"

Another string of charges — farther off.

"Maybe they've lost us," said Walker.

"Motor Room? Damn it, can you hear me?"

I put my head on my arms. I couldn't think. The air was beginning to burn my eyes. I shut them — the sting was worse. I opened them again.

A series of explosions — fainter now.

"Anybody alive in the Motor Room?"

A distant rumble. They had lost contact on us. Sure, they'd lost contact.

Quiet then. Quiet in a madhouse on the ocean bottom.

I looked up. Shambles. On the table — paint chips, cork, coffee spilled, bits of broken cups.

Walker was doing something with his hands. He had the dividers. He speared a piece of cork with one point and held up the prize, staring vacantly at it.

I looked away. I pictured the boat lying there on the bottom, bubbles trailing up from the Motor Room. One compartment flooded, and the rest of us sitting there, half-delirious and trapped.

The Captain sent a working party aft to try to establish contact with the Motor Room, and we waited.

Fifteen minutes . . . not a sound.

Twenty minutes.

The air was getting thicker. I could hear Walker breathing heavily.

Half an hour — my mind was a blank.

And then, suddenly, someone was singing. Words broke through to my consciousness.

"I got those fur-reight tu-rain blu-ews . . ."

Something was wrong with my head.

". . . those fur-reight tu-rain blu-ews . . ."

What was the matter with my head?

I looked at Walker. Strangely, he was laughing — and crying at the same time.

". . . freight t-rain blues . . ."

The song was coming from the speaker.

I laughed back at Walker. Someone had put a record on the Torpedo Room phonograph. We laughed louder. We sobbed and howled at each other.

"Turn — turn that damned thing off," the Captain's voice broke through.

The song stopped abruptly. I couldn't laugh any more. I wiped a shirt sleeve across my face.

And then a new voice sounded from the speaker.

"Control Room? Control?"

"Control," said the Captain in a hollow tone.

"Control, this is the Motor Room. What the hell's the matter with your speaker up there? We've been trying to report a minor leak for thirty minutes."

The table jumped under the impact of Walker's fist.

"Motor Room!" he shouted. "You hear 'em? My God, it's the Motor Room! They're not flooded. My God, they're not flooded!"

He pounded the table again.

I looked blankly at the maniac.

"Let's see if we can get out of here and fix that leak, Roscoe," said the Captain. "Those destroyers are gone."

The words made no sense.

"Take us up, Roscoe. Hit the surface!"

The man was mad.

Then I heard air shoot through the pipelines overhead. Air blasted into the ballast tanks, forcing out the water.

The boat rolled back to an even keel. I could feel the lift of the air, the rise of the ship.

He wasn't mad. My God, we were going up!

Two hundred feet.

Up.

One hundred and fifty feet.

Up — I repeated the word over to myself.

Up — like the lilt of a song.

Up into the air — into a rush of rich, heady air.

"Stand by to surface!"

"Walker! Man! We're going up!"

The diving klaxon blasted out the "surface" signal.

"Up!" I yelled against the noise.

Walker grinned; he couldn't hear me.

"Up!" I shouted.

THUS TO REVISIT

by ANNE GOODWIN WINSLOW

DEEP in the ground the dead
should be, in lead fast bound,
their names in marble overhead;
but you went free;
you were given to the wind instead,
and to the sea.

The spells by which a ghost is laid
I know; the amulets made
to wear between the midnight and the dawn,
I have them on.
What charm avails
for ghosts that go
not when cocks crow,
nor come in witches' tales?

Under a mound, under a stone,
they bide, who wait for the last day;
but your way is the way
of wings that ride,
of sails that come
on every tide, home.

Acent on Living

THIS MONTH

Casual access to music has always been hard to find in the United States. The *café concert*, where a family and its friends could idle away an hour or two, with a fairly good orchestra in the background, never dug itself into the American scene. The Continental always took it for granted; he listened to the music if he felt like it, talked if he didn't. Without ritual of headwaiters and reservations, he picked a table as near or far from the music as he wished, moved on whenever he'd had enough. The music was offered for the price of his coffee or bock. He did not hesitate to denounce it if it failed to meet his standard. Neither reverent nor indifferent, he was willing to be diverted if the orchestra deserved his ear.

Beerbohm, in *Zuleika Dobson*, wrote of Oxford, "The Germans loved it too little, the Colonials too much." That is somewhat the case with the American and his music — a blank or a project of pietistic appreciation. Radio, records, and dance bands serve him, but he has rarely a chance to be present where a small orchestra of good quality is playing. By a sufficient advance strategy, if he can afford it, he may book himself into a symphony concert during which he is forbidden to smoke, whisper, or cough. Even the Pops concerts of Boston, café tables and all, serve refreshments *between* "Pomp and Circumstance" and "Anitra's Dance," and anyone touching spoon to cup while the edification is going on is virtuously shushed by the congregation.

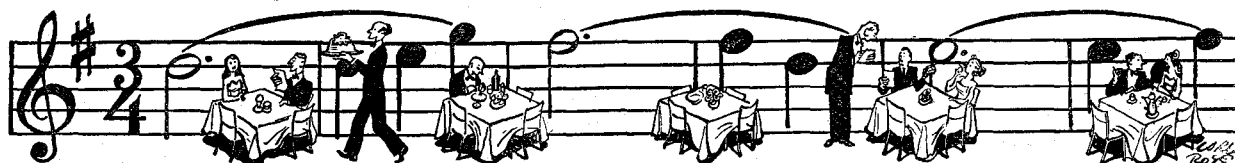
If Joseph Wechsberg's gypsies (page 100) were set up in café circumstances in almost any American city and let alone by the management, all concerned would prosper. The trouble is that the management is not willing to run a mere café: it dreams of being a night club with a floor show, a velvet rope to keep customers away, a doorman and a master of ceremonies. There are in New York at this moment, well out of the midtown hub-

bub, gypsy orchestras playing in cafés, but they are hopelessly under the thumb of a master of ceremonies. (Master of ceremonies: a stage-struck individual of insufficient talent to go on the stage.) The master of ceremonies vocalizes on his own account, and to that end shifts the orchestra into the current popular songs and instructs the audience in what comes next. He is not an actor, nor an entertainer, nor a musician. He is the great enemy of café life in the United States. If he were in radio, he'd be running a quiz show.

Too little is known about the private life of the radio quiz master. His playmates before the microphone wallow in self-disclosure. For years now, they have shown us that almost any simple question will stump them. Their geography is as bad as their history. They are short on vocabulary, reasoning power, and arithmetic. But they come forward eagerly to broadcast their inability. In consequence, radio has devised a special way of life for the people who answer the quiz master's questions: giving enough wrong answers, they automatically become eligible for the grand prize and accrued jackpot.

The pattern laid down for the quiz master is less rewarding. He must display at all times enthusiasm and admiration for the contestants. He must be gratified that their woeful responses are not even wider of the mark. Their faltering "I dunno's" would do credit to Jeans or Eddington or Kieran, he should imply. Missed by a hair, but a splendid effort, he proclaims.

Dedicated to the reward of error, the quiz master can hardly escape a conditioned reflex peculiar to his calling. He will come in time, one supposes, to pulling on doors marked "Push," accepting a *biscuit Tortoni* instead of ham and eggs, and thrusting costly gifts on the cab driver who lands him in Brooklyn instead of the Bronx. But before his



reversal of values becomes complete, let him ponder the example of a heroic quiz master reported by R. J. Hicks (page 104).

Again on the gypsy music, it stands very nearly by itself as an all-night pleasure. If one first hears it in a café about nine P.M., he is likely to find, on next looking at his watch, that five or six hours have sped by. The Cuban *danzon*, built up throughout the night with imperceptibly increasing tension, achieves a similar dominance over the listener. Joseph Hergesheimer's description of the *danzon* in

San Cristobal de la Habana — a subtle and persuasive book — is worth rereading and, for that matter, a reprinting by Alfred Knopf.

It was in Hergesheimer's *Java Head*, you will recall, that the Manchu princess married the Salem shipmaster and went to live in a McIntire house in Essex County. Her tiny brocaded slippers and exotic finery are still to be seen at the Essex Institute, only a few steps from the Peabody Museum's scrimshaw work of which MacKinley Helm is writing (page 106). C. W. M.



MUSIC

Violinist and writer, JOSEPH WECHSBERG converted his experiences in a ship's orchestra into the thoroughly diverting book, *Looking for a Bluebird*. He is an American via Czechoslovakia and is now traveling in Europe, whence he has promised the *Atlantic* an account of *tourisme* in Switzerland.

GYPSY FIDDLE

by JOSEPH WECHSBERG

ACCORDING to a Hungarian proverb, all a man needs to get drunk is a glass of water and a gypsy fiddler. A *real* gypsy. Most of the *primases* (leaders) that you hear these days in the night clubs of New York, Rio, and Paris won't make you even tipsy unless you have had a lot of expensive vintage champagne to go with the music.

It's not always easy to tell an authentic gypsy fiddler from a phony. Some impostors fool you with trills, ornamentations, rubati, and caprices in the minor key that sound almost like the real thing. They play intervals less than a half tone and make sudden transitions, from C to E major or A flat major, which are characteristic of gypsy old-timers. I remember one so-called *tzigane* who played in a little *boîte* off Montmartre's Rue Lepic, when I was a musician in Paris, in the late twenties. This fellow Ferenc pretended to be a gypsy *primas* from southern Hungary, although everybody around the musicians' café on Place Pigalle knew he was really a Pole who had transformed himself into a gypsy because that way he made more money. Playing *à la tzigane* meant going from table to table and sticking one's bow through the curtains of a *chambre séparée*, until the clients gave you a large tip to get rid of you.



FERENC AND HIS GYPSY BAND

FORMERLY WITH

HIS MAJESTY'S HUNGARIAN COURT ORCHESTRA

That, it appeared soon, was a grave mistake. Ferenc should have known that there had never been a Court Orchestra, because in Budapest there was no Court.

I wasn't present at Ferenc's downfall but heard the story from a reliable friend and eyewitness who spent one evening at the *boîte* when, around midnight, a group of sinister men came in. That was not unusual: Paris was crowded with anarchists, nihilists, and followers of radical political thought. The sinister men studied the Court Orchestra sign as if they had some trouble in reading it, ordered some wine, and began to watch Ferenc's performance. When he came toward their table, they asked him to play an old czardas by Racs Pali, who had been the King of the Gypsies eighty years ago. Ferenc retorted with a watered-down version of a rather westernized piece of gypsy music, the "Gypsy Airs" (*Zigeunerweisen*) by Pablo de Sarasate. The sinister men became violently enraged, beat up Ferenc, and chased away his musicians. Then they mounted the platform, took up the instruments, and began to play themselves. They played so well that the proprietor, a real Hungarian, broke out into sobs; and instead of having the intruders arrested, hired them on the spot.

I went to the *boîte* a few nights later. On the platform I saw seven black-haired, mustachioed fellows with high cheekbones and yellowish complexions. There were two violins, a viola da gamba, a cello, a tambouratch (a big bass guitar), and a zither that was beaten with hammers. They looked like alumni of the more notorious Balkan prisons. They sat there quiet, intent, almost motionless, watching their leader. Then the *primas* got up and, by way of tuning, gave them the D. That impressed me greatly. The phony Ferenc had always tuned first the A, as every Western musician would do.

The *primas* put his fiddle up to his chin and started to play. He began with a rhapsody-like song, sad and haunting and very soft. For a while he played alone, now and then accompanied by chords of the zither. One by one, the others came in and the mood of the song changed. It became violent, primitive, wild. The structure was simple: they were doing variations on the leader's theme. Sometimes they would fall back, while the *primas* would perform virtuoso trills and ornamental notes, fast scales and doubling notes. Then the orchestra would unite in a general wailing song, and the leader would play a solo on his fiddle, parlando, crying and singing and sobbing on his instrument.

It was an extraordinary performance. The man held the bow with his whole right fist, which would have killed my old violin teacher. He played false notes and committed all kinds of terrible violin crimes: he would never have made the beginners' class at any music school. But as he played on, something happened to him — and to the public. The people began to hum and to tap the floor, and some women began to cry. The music became louder and faster, the rhythms were more accentuated, and after some time, the entire audience was stamping its feet, shouting and singing. A man and a woman jumped on a table and began to dance the *czardas*, a Hungarian national dance which needs very little space and great body control to be executed.

The rest of the night is only a dim memory. Everybody was behaving in an ecstatic, intoxicated way. I think the gypsy musicians played on for hours, like the crazed addicts of a wild jam-session. When they finally ended, with a long, sad, lingering outcry, most people in the audience were half-dead from exhaustion.

I went back to the *boîte* many times later to study the secret of their gypsies' primitive art. It seemed so easy: the constant use of the augmented second in melodic progression; a lot of improvisations; odd harmonies and sharp rhythms. But when I tried to imitate them on my fiddle, it didn't sound exciting — just bad. I made friends with the *primas* and sometimes he would let me sit on the platform and play with them for a while, but it was no use. They were not playing music: they were telling each other stories on their instruments, funny and sad stories,



tales of love and hatred. Once the *primas* told me that they could play more than two hundred different melodies, which they had picked up on their wanderings.

"We hear a song and play it again," he said. "It's like somebody telling a story. You don't always tell a story the same way. You make ycur own changes and then other people change it, and when the story comes back to you, you won't even recognize it any more. We play *lasser* (slow) or *friss* (fast), and we count either *ütch* (three) or *dört* (four)." He always used Turkish words when he talked of his music. He liked to talk music all the time but he couldn't read a single note: none of his men could. They had never heard of trioles or diminished sept chords but once they had heard Suppé's "Light Cavalry" and in no time they had rearranged the piece and played their own version of it.

Sometimes he would put down his fiddle and talk about his idols, the great gypsy fiddlers: Racs Pali, who died in 1885, leaving thirty-six children, "all of them gypsy musicians"; János Bihari, who played in the "golden age of gypsy music," at the beginning of the nineteenth century; Czinka Panna and Czermak, great composers of simple tunes.

A real gypsy plays best when he "feels" the dim lights, the perfume of beautiful women, the drinks and whispered voices. To excite others, he must be excited himself. Watching them as they suffer and rejoice and finally go beserk, I've always understood why so many high-class ladies deserted their high-class but boring husbands to run away with a *primas*. Gypsies are very exciting people, and in the Balkans they have the same glamour that surrounds toreadors in Spain and movie stars in America. What the high-class ladies don't know, and always have to learn, is the sad fact that they will never be able to compete with a gypsy's fiddle. Gypsies need music: they play by way of self-expression, as Russians sing and Spaniards dance.

Being interesting but highly unstable people, gypsy musicians have had bad publicity ever since they appeared in Europe one thousand years ago. There is a popular saying that all gypsies are thieves. When I was a kid in Czechoslovakia and a gypsy band invaded the town, all the women locked up

their cupboards and drawers, "because those gypsies steal everything." Later on I spent nights in Hungary and Slovakia with gypsies at their bivouac places. They parked their haycarts at the edge of a forest — to evade the gendarmes — and then they would start to sing and play and dance around a fire. They were nice and sad and lost. They always made me think of what Franz Liszt said of them, "people that know not whence they came nor whither they go."

They never stole anything from me.

FOOD

Author of many cookbooks, an authority on food and drink, CROSBY GAIGE is equally well known as a theatrical producer. He is the chairman of New York's Wine and Food Society.

RICE AND CURRIES

by CROSBY GAIGE

RICE has stood more use and abuse from cooks in general, and particularly English and American practitioners, than almost any other article of diet. Ladies who have perfect records as wives and mothers falter and fumble when it comes to rice. The subject is not only controversial, but extremely difficult of proper definition. At least one baffled woman of my acquaintance throws up her hands and weeps that only Orientals and some Negro cooks know how to cook rice.



My own notion is that there are at least two satisfactory ways of solving the problem, and that the main cause of failure lies in lack of knowledge

of rice itself. There are certain types and varieties of rice that will be gluey no matter what you do to them, and there are other types that, with the right technique, will invariably produce the desired result.

The most expert rice manipulator of my experience is Aram Silesian of the Golden Horn Restaurant in New York. He prefers a Persian rice if he can get it. If it is not available he uses a converted rice. If he can't get that he will use a Patna. All of these are slim in body and long in grain.

Anyone who is persistent enough with the grocer can make him carry a stock of Patna rice. This particular variety originally thrust its green stems up through the marshes of the Ganges. When the

ripened kernels were harvested they were long and slender and had a characteristically sweet and nutty flavor. For some time past, our contacts with the valley of the Ganges have been sporadic, but we are lucky that seeds of Patna were brought to the lowlands of Louisiana and Texas, where they took root and flourished.

Take half a pound of Patna — one heaping measuring cup (if you have more than five to feed take a pound) — and wash and wash and wash in five or six waters, rubbing with the hands so that all the surface starch is removed. Put it in a saucepan with enough cold water to cover — two to four cups. The bottom half of a pyrex double boiler is a good utensil. A little grease rubbed on the bottom of the pot will inhibit sticking. Add one teaspoon of salt. Put over a brisk fire and bring to a boil. When the water foams to the top of the pot, remove to a lower heat. In about nine or ten minutes, test a kernel with the fingers or the teeth to see if the cooking process is nearly completed. If the kernel is getting soft but still offers a little resistance, take off the fire. Empty the rice into a colander and rinse with hot water. Place rice in a pot or casserole, bury two or three nuggets of butter in the flaky mass, cover with a towel, and put in a low oven for about fifteen minutes. This completes the cooking and allows the grains to swell. Rice should never be overcooked. The nut of my thesis is that one should learn the habits of a certain type of rice and then stick to that variety. Rice is a variable quantity.

I have a valued neighbor, Charles de Coursey Hughes, an Englishman who spent much of his business life in Hong Kong and Shanghai. By profession he is a banker, by avocation a gardener and a cook. When he gives a curry dinner it is a high occasion that must take days of planning. The end result is art in one of its more pleasant forms.

The curry proper may have as its central theme beef, chicken, lamb, or fish, swimming in a sauce that is prodigal in quantity and in savor. Bowls of steaming-hot, perfectly cooked rice will be passed first, to be heaped in white, flaky mounds on the plates. Then the curry, with its colorful and tantalizing sauce, will be generously ladled on the rice.

There are certain attendant rites and ceremonies, known in a curry artist's parlance as sambals. These are companionate condiments or appetizers — sour or sweet or peppery or bland — to accommodate various tastes. In the house of an authentic pukka sahib, it is not supposed to be good form to serve less than nine varieties, and at the Hughes table there are usually twice that number. They are all finely chopped and presented in individual glass dishes on a large tray so that each guest may make his choice and spoon his selections onto the rim of his plate for nibbling along with the curry-freighted rice.

Here is a list of the more usual sambals: —

Chutney is an essential — Major Grey, an old

favorite; Bengal Club, Tamarind, and Cashmere. There are some tasty American chutneys under the trade-marks of Crosse and Blackwell and of Raffetto.

Sweet sambals. Pineapple; sweet relish pickles; grated fresh coconut; sweet pickled onions; chopped roasted peanuts; toasted grated dry coconut; sweet red peppers; sieved hard-boiled egg yolks and egg whites separate; rings of tiny onions, French fried; India relish; hot crumbled bits of crisp fried bacon.

Sour sambals. Sour pickled cocktail onions; pickled walnuts; mustard pickles; capers.

Fish sambals. Sardines; shrimps; lobster meat; pickled mackerel.

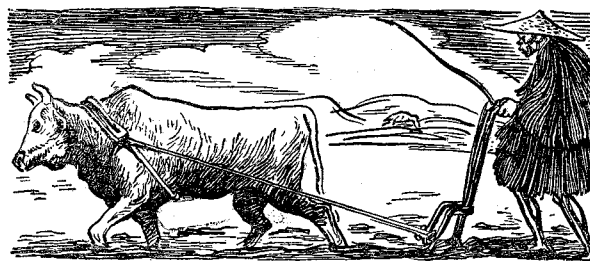
Bombay duck is supposed to be an Oriental must. It will never be a must for me. I can take it, or I can leave it with no regret. This little tidbit has nothing to do with duck, but is a small fish called the bummalu, about the size of a smelt. These are caught in large quantities in the Indian Ocean and are dubiously preserved by drying for unsuspicious customers.

Toasted popadams are served with curries in Indian households. They are a sort of salted water biscuit made of wheat flour. Don't worry about them, because they are hard to find in America, and only a perfectionist will cavil at their absence.

There is a lady, Mrs. Charles Clifton Moses of Bluffton, South Carolina, whose pleasant epistolary acquaintance I have made through the fact that she sometimes reads my essays in the *Atlantic*. She is kind enough to praise when she feels I have deserved praise. On the other hand, I have had at least one remonstrance from her, written more in sorrow than in anger, taking exception to the unorthodox presence of eggplant, tomatoes, and apple in a curry of lobster and crab meat. She lived long in the East and should know. She tempered her reproof by sending me her own recipe for a curry. I have tried it and, in recognition of its excellence, I take the liberty of passing it on to others. The only suggestion that I offer in connection with her recipe is that if you can't find green ginger root you may substitute for it two tablespoons of the solid parts of chutney sliced into thin slivers.

CURRY À LA MOSES

Cut three pounds of fine, tender, lean beef or lamb into one and one-half inch cubes. Brown one sliced onion in half vegetable fat and half butter — butter alone is too apt to burn. Throw the onion away. In the fat, sauté your meat until it is a golden brown on all sides. Add salt, freshly ground black pepper, one small piece of green ginger root, chopped fine, one tablespoon of curry powder. Blend well. Add enough boiling water to cover the meat, scraping up all brown in the skillet into the stew. Add the juice and rind of one lemon. Simmer gently for several hours. Just before serving, add the milk from one



fresh coconut or the milk from one can of moist coconut — which is fine for this. Blend three tablespoons of butter and four level tablespoons of flour and use to thicken the sauce. End up with enough liquid over the meat to have plenty of sauce. Serve with dry rice and nine condiments to six real curry-eaters.

Here are the nine condiments listed by Mrs. Moses: —

Fresh grated coconut or moist canned coconut	Crisp bits of fried bacon
Toasted dry coconut	Chopped peanuts
Hard-boiled sieved egg whites	India relish
Hard-boiled sieved egg yolks	French fried onion rings
	Major Grey's chutney

My own practice with a curry of chicken may depart from beaten paths, but as the whole art of cookery is based on such divergencies, it has its justification.

CHICKEN CURRY WATCH HILL FARM

Split in half two plump fryers (about three and one-half pounds each), lightly dust with pepper and salt, and let sit for an hour or so. In a saucepan heat two tablespoons of butter and in it sear the pieces of chicken to close the pores but without browning the meat. Add one quart of water, two large onions, sliced, one clove of garlic, a stalk of celery, chopped, six peppercorns, and a good curl of lemon rind. Cover and cook for thirty minutes. Remove the chicken; when cool, skin and cut the white meat from the breasts and the dark meat from the second joints into small manageable pieces. The wings and drumsticks may be saved for another meal. Moisten the chicken pieces with a little stock to prevent them from drying out. Put the bones and skin back into the soup stock and simmer slowly for one hour. Strain through cheesecloth.

The sauce is made in this way: Cover one cup of grated coconut, either fresh, or moist canned, or the excellent dehydrated coconut put up by Durkee and by Trade Winds Corporation, with two cups of rich milk and let stand for about half an hour. Strain





through a cloth and save the coconut for roasting. In a saucepan melt two tablespoons of butter. Blend in three tablespoons of flour or arrowroot and one and one-half tablespoons of curry powder. (Mrs. Moses says to mix the flour and curry powder together to prevent curry from lumping.) Cook for two or three minutes, stirring constantly. Gradually stir in two cups of hot chicken broth, two cups of the above-mentioned coconut milk, and one and one-half tablespoons of finely shredded chutney. Add the chicken meat and correct seasoning with salt and pepper. Simmer slowly for a few minutes until all ingredients are smooth and well blended. At the last moment stir in three tablespoons of cream and the juice of half a lemon. The creation is now ready for service in a casserole, or preferably in a chafing dish if you have one. This combination with plates of flaky rice and not too elaborate an assortment of condiments is one of those marriages that are made only in heaven.

Most of the leading American spice grinders package an all-purpose curry powder that is quite satisfactory for everyday use. There is, however, an infinite range in the potencies and undertones in a curry powder. Anyone who has the time and the inner urge to become expert can mix his own and finally arrive at the perfect blend for the individual palate.

Herewith are two combinations for experimentation. It should be remembered that all ingredients must be very finely powdered and sifted before weighing, that they must be well blended, and that they should be stored in small tightly stoppered jars or wide-mouthed bottles.

A HOT CURRY POWDER

2 pounds turmeric	4 pounds coriander seed
1 pound red chili	1 pound fenugreek
1 pound black pepper	1 pound caraway seed

SIR RANALD MARTIN'S CURRY POWDER

1 pound turmeric	1½ ounces cayenne pepper
¾ pound coriander seed	1½ ounces cardamom seed
3 ounces ginger	½ ounce caraway seed
2 ounces black pepper	1 tablespoon cloves

The powder improves with age, as time allows the various essences to blend. So it is not amiss, once you have mastered your art, to mix up a substantial batch.

A small bottle with an attractive label will make an agreeable present for a friend.

RADIO

THE nom de plume R. J. Hicks conceals the identity of a well-known newspaperman.

THANKS FOR A TERRIBLE TRY

by R. J. HICKS

IT sounded at first like the usual quiz show — studio audience bellowing, oozy commercials, gasp-making patter about the size of the kitty — but there was something about the Quiz Master's tone which stayed my hand on the knob.

"So you're Mrs. Boheme Quiltman, and you come from McClusky, North Dakota? Hmm." The way he uttered these words (a touch of Basil Rathbone in an unsympathetic role) caused the audience to applaud a shade uncertainly.

"McClusky must be over a thousand miles from Hollywood," he continued. "Tell me, Mrs. Quiltman, what possessed you to come all this way?"

"Wanted a little vacation. Been saving up for years. Came by bus," said Mrs. Quiltman.

"Ah, yes. It is, after all, a free country. But once here, Mrs. Quiltman, what strange whim induced you to appear on a quiz program?"

"Want ta win a little money, I guess. Tee-hee. Could use it back home in McClusky!"

"Could you? Well, let's see what sort of figure you cut. Incidentally, the makers of Chewy Chewettes will pay you \$11,000 if you contrive to answer this one question correctly." (A wail of muffled cupidity from Mrs. Quiltman.) "All right. How many decades are there in twenty years?"

"Dec — Jer mind repeating that, Mister?"

"You heard it all right, but I will. How many decades in twenty years? . . . You don't know, do you, you pinhead? As a matter of form I must wait for the sound of the gong."

The Quiz Master waited in sadistic silence, with none of the little goadings and sympathetic gigglings customary with his more normal confreres. From the audience there came sounds of puzzled restiveness. The gong sounded.

"I sometimes wonder about people like you, Mrs.



Quiltman," continued the Quiz Master in blue-diamond tones. "You must hear such words as 'decade' occasionally, and read them in a newspaper, even in McClusky. Why don't you ever ask what they mean?"

"Well, I —"

"Or look in that handsomely engraved leather-covered dictionary which I'm sure you display prominently in the Quiltman place on Elm Street. Yet you go on, year after year, taking 'decade' for granted, and scores — hundreds — of other words as well. You probably haven't the slightest idea how long a generation is?"

"I — well, I —"

"As I thought. What grade did you end up in, in school?"

"Why, the same one everyone ends up in."

"Have you any real interests in life?"

"In-terests?"

"Ah, well, let's not go into that." (Renewed signs of restiveness from the audience.) "Do you ever read any books, Mrs. Quiltman?"

Mrs. Quiltman by this time sounded distinctly defiant. "I should just say so!"

"And what, if one may ask, was the title of the last one that you read?"

"Why — er — why, it was a very good best-seller. Very good."

"Ever write any letters?"

"Don't have any call to, Mister Smartypants!" (A cheer from the audience.)

"I see, Mrs. Quiltman. Well, I wish you luck, I suppose; but I honestly think you'd do well to stay away from any too public demonstration of your mental attainments. I'm pretty sure that you would have been incapable of answering any question put to you tonight. It isn't a matter of being flustered, or of not being able to think on your feet (capacious though I observe them to be). You are just an ignoramus. Good night."

"Now," continued the Quiz Master, to a background of rather plaintive growling, "Chewy Chewettes simply double the kitty each time a question is muffed. So we have \$22,000 awaiting Mister — what is your name, sir?"

"Mortimer Flange. Just call me Mort. And my home town's right here in Hollywood. I'm a bus boy at the Hotel Hibiscus."

"I see. And are you a film fan?"

"Am I! You kiddn, Mister?"

"Good. I take it that you are familiar with the names of Bette Davis and Charlie Chaplin?"

"You kiddn?" asked Mort again.

"Very well. Bette Davis often appears in tragedy; \$22,000 if you can tell me what kind of films Chaplin appears in."

"What kind of films?"

"Yes. In other words, the opposite of tragedy. Charlie Chaplin makes — what kind of films?"

"Funny uns?"

"Yes, but they are known as — what?"

Long pause. Crash of gong. "The answer is, of course, comedy," said the Quiz Master. "Comedy is the opposite of tragedy."

"It is?"

"Yes. Surely you knew that?"

"Seems like I heard the word before some place, but you don't hear it much around the Hotel Hibiscus." (Applause.) "Dunno what it means, anyway."

"How old are you?"

"Nineteen — going on twenty."

"Do you read much?"

"Sure — fan magazines; and the funnies."

"But what kind of imbecile are you that you don't know that Chaplin is a comedian?"

"Hunh? What was that you just called me?"

"Only an imbecile."

"Oh, for a minute there I thought you was maybe gettn fresh."

"Do you break many dishes while you work?"

"Fair number."

"I don't doubt it. I can just picture your puzzled frown each time you start to pile them on the tray, never learning the knack, amazed each time again at the renewed complexity of existence. What do you want out of life? What would you like to be? Surely not just a bus boy? . . . Well, I won't detain you, Mortimer. You are a moron, but at least a happy one, apparently. Good night."

"Your name, please?"

"Miss Imogene Cusack. I am just twenty-three." The voice was mincingly self-possessed. Its owner evidently had well-defined ideas about Poise — keep the tone level at all times . . . watch yourself . . . the girls from the office are out there listening.

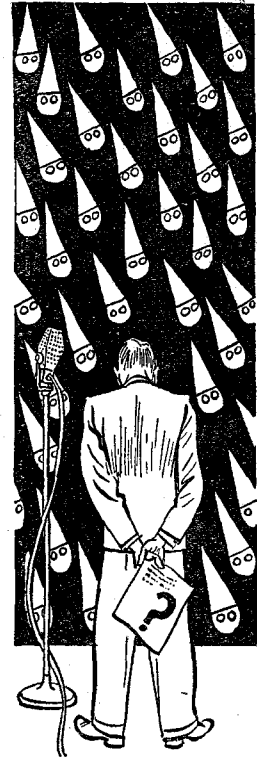
"Your profession?"

"Stenographer. I work in an office — in a business house, that is — in Pasadena."

"Good. Now, Miss Cusack, the sum of \$44,000 awaits you if you answer this correctly. You are standing on the eastern shore of England, looking out eastward across the English Channel and the North Sea. Name any one country towards which you are looking."

"Well — er — I think I know —"

"Good. But time is slipping past, so let me put it this way: name any country besides England and Scotland which has its coastline on the North Sea or the English Channel. . . . Think of D Day."





"Think of *what*?"

"Never mind — think of a map of Europe."

"Maps. Oh, I don't look at maps much."

"Well, guess!"

Miss Cusack's veneer was cracking fast. She cried excitedly: "*Ireland!*" (Wild pandemonium from the audience, which apparently thought her right.)

"Wrong, you little silly, utterly wrong," said the Quiz Master wearily. "Why *don't* you look at a map now and again? You *do* realize, I hope, that the United States is now a great world power?"

"Why certainly," retorted Miss Cusack, with hauteur. "My boy friend hopes to get on the next Olympic Games track squad." (Applause.)

"And why don't you cut out that phony bored look? Nobody expects every woman to be a beauty, but you could attain some degree of charm and attractiveness if you would relax — be natural. That's to say, you might have done so — it's probably much too late now. To me you look almost repellent, minus all the feminine graces. No kindness, no sympathy, no warmth. Just a desiccated imitativeness. How sorry I am for your boy friend."

Miss Cusack said, "Am I being insulted?"

"Yes," returned the Quiz Master with gusto. Miss Cusack burst into tears and withdrew. "All right, next. Come on, ladies and gentlemen, not much more time."

The audience was in uproar. Some voices could be heard maintaining that it was all just a gag, as when Hope insults his guest stars.

"Ah, we have here?"

"Jonathan Spawnson."

"And this, doubtless, is Mrs. Spawnson. Here goes for \$88,000. Last spring we had visiting us in the United States a Good Neighbor from the south. He is the head of the neighboring state directly to the south of us, a country with which we had a war just one hundred years ago. What is his name?"

Mrs. Spawnson: "General Eisenhower!"

Quiz Master, evenly: "You, Mr. Spawnson?"

Spawnson gave a sudden shout: "I got it — you mean he was from Mexico, don't you?"

"Yes, that's the country. Who is its president?"

Spawnson, fortissimo: "President Alamo!"

Quiz Master: "Good God. Well, our time is practically up, but I must ask you both one more question: Have you any children?"

The Spawnsons replied in chorus, "Five fine sons and two fine daughters."

"And I suppose your seven children are sitting out there in the audience or listening at home? What must they think of such parents! If either of you had a sense of the fitness of things you would have taken a good deal of trouble to ensure that you did *not* expose your ludicrous inadequacies in public

like this. Why undermine whatever lingering faith they may still have —"

The telephone rang insistently. I answered it in hot impatience, aware of what sounded like blows and imprecations flowing from the radio. When at last I was free to dash back, the program had ended. Silence reigned. Since then I have worn my fingers to the bone twiddling at the dials, but, alas, never to this day have I been able to find again that beautiful, beautiful Quiz Master.

FINE ARTS

MAC KINLEY HELM is the author of *Modern Mexican Painters*, and of *Angel Mo' and Her Son, Roland Hayes* and *A Matter of Love*.

SCRIMSHAW

by MAC KINLEY HELM

UNTIL last summer, my acquaintance with the skimshandering business was limited. Melville's quaint term had stuck in my mind, along with a *Moby Dick* line about "little boxes of dentistical-looking implements" which whalemens carried around in pursuit of the business of scrimshaw. But before I stopped in at the Peabody Museum in Salem, I had never seen any quantity of the ivory trinkets produced by skimshanders. The Salem collection spread out an old chapter in the history of American folk art and filled me with new visions of the aesthetic aspect of whaling.

As for the name handed down with the trinkets, there is no bookish evidence to show how the bits of carved bone and whale's teeth came to be so delightfully called — skimshander, skrimshander, scrimshont, scrimshant, and finally, scrimshaw — although people have expressed curiosity ever since 1850, when a whaling enthusiast complained that the late Noah Webster had neglected the art of the whalemens. But whatever the source of its untraceable title, a piece of scrimshaw, properly speaking, is an object — a box or a busk or a pie-crust trimmer — carved from whalebone or ivory by an idle hand on a schooner.

Collectors have thought it a pity that the term



should be given to the work of soldiers as well: to the pieces of engraving and carving from salvaged airplanes and branches of coral which were brought home from the lonely Pacific at the end of the war, and to powder horns trimmed with carved flags in the colonial era. Perhaps these things could be labeled scrimshaw with some justification, for soldiers in whatever war have had something in common with whalers. The French and Indian War, with its several summers of indolence, spared time for the troops to carve Spanish horns and dye the designs with goldthread and sumac, just as in the late war the hands of bored soldiers itched to whittle with jack-knives. Still, most museum curators, being historically-minded, give the term only to whale's teeth and pieces of whalebone carved by sailors.



The decorative carving and engraving of tusks, teeth, and bones is an art as old as the hills. Complete tusks of mammoths carved with animal forms have been dug up from subterranean levels, along with whimsical torsos of nude Stone Age females and fragments of ivory engraved with pictures of huntsmen and beasts. Yet of all the materials used by the sculptors from the first Aurignacian expressionist to the ultimate modernist, none is more curious than the substance called whalebone, first put to use in Middle Age art. It comes from the whale — the right whale, the bowhead, the sperm whale — but it never was bone. It is dug out of the mouth of the mammal, where it is formed in the palate, and in its natural state grows the beard which provided the "horsehair" that covered the best of Victorian sofas. Somewhat tough in the handling, though plastic and flexible, it was prepared for the corseted bosom by boiling. Not so long ago, this uncomely growth, beard and all, brought five dollars a pound in the markets. Captains of whaling ships issued it sparingly, to keep their crews out of mischief; and between whales, so to speak, the sailors made busks to support the breasts of their sweethearts and wives.

The busk was no new invention. The bodies of both men and women had been pent up with busks in Athens and Ephesus, and later in Paris. John Donne, the Dean of St. Paul's, celebrated the stay in his nineteenth *Elegie*, "To His Mistress Going to Bed," composed, no doubt, before ordination:

Unlace your self, for that harmonious chyme
Tells me from you, that now it is bed time.
Off with that happy busk, which I envie,
That still can be, and still can stand so nigh.

Nevertheless, the American busk has its own naïve place in the history of our indigenous art. It was adorned with intimate verses and original pastoral

pictures of sweethearts and flowers. Unlike the jeweled busk exposed in the courts of the Bourbon monarchs, the American busk was familiarly worn inside the New England bodice. The decorations and verses were flavored by that sweet inward use.

There was, to be sure, one cynic among the sentimental, self-trained artists. A busk exhibited in the Old Dartmouth Historical Society's whaling museum on Johnny Cake Hill in New Bedford is ornamented with a picture of the Crucifixion and a cryptic couplet: —

HARK I HEAR THE SAVIOUR CRY
ELOI ELOI LAMA SABACHTHANI

which means, we are told in the Scriptures, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" More commonly, the poet's intention is tender and not ironical: —

This bone once in a sperm whale's jaw did rest
Now 'tis intended for a woman's brest,
This, my love, I do intend
For you to wear and not to lend.

The turning of whale's teeth into mantelpiece ornaments came in with the revival of sperm-whale hunting in the second century of that industry's American history. In the old days of whaling, the Nantucket whalers took all the oil they could handle from dead whales drifting offshore. When the *Christopher Hussey* was blown out to sea in the year 1712, the first sperm whale was killed by an American whaler and a new form of hunting developed. Such a whale had been cast up on the coast of Norfolk nearly a hundred years before that, and Sir Thomas Browne tells how the people had gathered to admire its immensity. Sir Thomas observed with surprise that the sperm oil came from the head and not from parts "official to generation"; and that the mammal, unlike finback and sulphur-bottom, had a lower jaw with a nice set of teeth.

Since sperm oil was the most costly of whale oils and ambergris from a sperm whale's sick colon fetched up to \$500 a pound, the American whalers gave over their comfortable coastwise cruising for the risks of deep whaling from home. The risks were considerable. "The Spermacetti Whale found by the Nantuckois," Thomas Jefferson wrote to the French Minister, "is an active, fierce animal, and required vast address and boldness in the fishermen." And in one of the most poignant dialogues in American letters, from a narrative of the fateful wreck of the *Essex*, these significant lines will be found: —

CAPTAIN: "My God! Mr. Chace, what's the matter?" FIRST MATE: "We have been stove by a whale!"

During the War of 1812 the American output of oil dropped nearly to zero, and three years after the war there were still only a few ports from which whalers put out: Nantucket, New Bedford, Fairhaven, Sag Harbor, Hudson, and Westport. But by 1818, whaling crews from dozens of harbors were searching the Pacific for heads that held as much as \$15,000 in oil. During the next forty years, with thousands of sailors from hundreds of crews enjoying long months of idleness, the whalers' art flowered.

The earliest skrimshandered whale teeth in the harbor museums come from the year 1829, if the dates are authentic. There are five from the hand of one Frederick Myrick, with colored engravings of the whaleship *Susan* of Nantucket on a voyage to the Sea of Japan. Some undated teeth are possibly older. William Osgood of Salem presented to the East India Marine Society, sometime before 1831, two "sperm whales' teeth, curiously carved," but they cannot be identified. The museum curators will nowhere vouch for a system of dating anonymous, undated teeth.

Before you could carve the tooth of a sperm whale into a mantelpiece souvenir, you had to come by it, and that was not easy. The whale did not willingly part with his teeth. You had to detach them by one or another quite nasty technique. Among the extractive procedures described to me by William H. Tripp, Curator of the Whaling Museum on Johnny Cake Hill, — and a member himself of the last old-style crew of whalers, — the method which seemed the most restful, although it was by no means the least horrid, employed the assistance of natural process.

The lower jaw of the whale was trailed overboard until the sharks ate the flesh and the gums rotted in ocean. The ridged teeth, then conveniently drawn, were filed smooth and the ivory surfaces polished with trying-pot ashes. Then dreams of fair women were pricked on from the Godey Books, or ideal ships traced from standard patterns, and the designs were engraved with jackknife and dentistical implements.

The New Bedford Museum displays a shelf of skrimshandering tools made by hand on the whaleship *Awashonks*: a small hack saw; a stout keyhole saw; and files, chisels, awls, drills, calipers, needles. But as Melville observes, most of the skrimshandering business was conducted with jackknives alone;



and except in removing the jagged end of the tooth, where a saw would be useful, the knife is not so unhandy — as I once discovered in smoothing the tip of a shoehorn that I had broken in unstopping a bottle. It only takes patience while the waxed pores are shaved off, sliver by sliver, like flakes of pepper.

Ishmael, who had a nice eye for art as the pages of *Moby Dick* abundantly show, was on the lookout across the Pacific for whale teeth carved with seascapes and ships, but he also mentions a few of the dozens of skrimshandered articles which can be seen in museums and private collections in such places as Salem, New Bedford, Cambridge, Nantucket, Mystic, and Wilmington. There are yarn reels, ditty boxes, and jaggging wheels; canes, bobbins, and bodkins; clothespins, toothpicks, and napkin rings — and practically never a piece of frivolous jewelry such as Eskimos and other non-Puritans were inspired to make. The range of the work runs from the useful and plain to the useless and pictured, the ornamentation often accented with primary colors. And of all these works of skrimshanders — as Melville says, they were skrimshanders who scrimshawed — the most enchanting are the mouth-watering pie wheels, some of them as dear to the hand as the picture of pie is endearing to hold in the mind.

Most of the whaling scenes and ladies of fashion cut into the teeth have turned out to be bookish, and the busks, though admittedly charming, are naïve and folksy. The jaggging wheels, as native a dish as the pies that they cut, were more often than not the work of talented carvers. In New Bedford, a pie wheel is set into a handle carved in the shape of a gull by some abstract Brancusi. Other handles are dowitchers, coots, and curlews, all cleanly cut and convincing; so convincing, in fact, that skeptics have wondered if the known Chinese skills of the time were not sometimes hired. There are pale Attic hands, archaic fish, mythological dogs; and all these entrancing forms of bone sculpture are hooked up to that native invention, the notched wheel used for cutting out pie crust and crimping the edges. If in the mind of the sailor the busk stood for Woman, the wheel stood for Home.

Like all good things in the story of art, scrimshaw has been subject to copying. When the *Charles W. Morgan* lay at New Bedford, the Portuguese sailors who kept her shipshape and entertained tourists copied trinkets in local collections and sold new pieces for old. Sometimes the collectors, whose name still is legion, have trouble in telling the forgeries; for new work can be done on old bone and ivory. But it is by no means too late to begin, with skeptical care, new collections of authentic scrimshaw, and public museums are so much the poorer if they do not possess illustrations of this branch of our native art.



Books and Men



HARRY SYLVESTER was graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1930 and for several years thereafter was employed as a newspaperman in New York City. Then fiction beckoned, and in 1935 he became a free lance, devoting full time to novels and short stories. He has written three novels, the latest of which, *Moon Gaffney*, was exceptionally well received by the critics. At the invitation of Bishop Sheil he defined these problems of the Catholic writer in a lecture at the Sheil School of Social Studies in Chicago.

PROBLEMS OF THE CATHOLIC WRITER

by HARRY SYLVESTER

1

THERE are no living American Catholics who are major writers. By two rules of thumb I suggest that American Catholic writers have been found wanting: individually they have failed to produce (1) a sufficient quantity of work, or (2) a high quality of it. We have a few poets and one or two short-story writers whose work is distinguished enough, but none of these has produced what might be called a body of work; while those Catholics — mostly novelists — who have published what might be described as a body of work have failed so utterly to create anything even suggesting art that they try the faith of those who have thought very much about cause and effect.

Nor can it be said that we Catholics, until quite recently, have made any serious attempt to improve matters. If anything, we have gloried in and extolled our mediocrity, as propaganda-minded as Communists, appraising writing — and indeed all the arts — by the same pragmatic standards: not by whether it is good writing or true writing but by whether or not the writer is on our side. We have not only extolled our apostles of mediocrity but have honored them. There is no national literary or artistic group whose mediocrity is quite so monolithic as that of the Gallery of Living Catholic Authors. By a precision which mere chance alone could not account for, the people who “choose” the members of the Gallery have almost infallibly neglected those few American Catholics who have written honestly or with distinction. Of course, we should not be too amazed

by this. A generation ago Charles Péguy reminded us of “the deep sureness with which the mediocre know and support the mediocre.”

Being by nature more polemicist than novelist, I hold that these things are self-evident to anyone seriously concerned with the state of Catholic writing, and my purpose is to try to suggest why such a condition prevails. A Catholic culture in other countries has produced writers of distinction; one has only to say England and France to suggest a dozen living Catholics who are creative writers of distinction or even greatness. There is nothing innate in Catholicism which inhibits the artistic process or blunts its edge. Quite the opposite. Why, then, in our own country, have we produced a group of meechers and propagandists, who are Catholics, however nominal, before they are people, and whose principal concern seems to be not to write truly but to win ecclesiastical approbation? That our Catholicism is newer and less rich culturally is a reason long advanced for this condition; at best it was never much of a reason and now it is no longer even an excuse. What then are the reasons?

In attempting to suggest what they may be, I must discuss matters which will cause some of my readers pain, and which may be deemed propaganda. I wish to make a disclaimer now. If during the course of my argument or exposition I indicate that the Church’s teaching on certain matters of personal relationship adds to the burden of Catholic writers in our neurotic time, it is not

because I believe the teaching erroneous or unreasonable, but simply that it is one more problem for the Catholic writer. Catholicism has never been an easy way of life for those who have understood it, and its disciplines both aid and handicap the creative artist.

Catholicism in our country has in effect sneered at and discouraged creative writing. Whatever a small, not particularly literate group thought good propaganda it called good writing; whatever it thought bad propaganda it termed bad writing. It is no longer quite that black and white in the minds of an increasing number of Catholics, but the damage to our perception remains in greater or lesser degree. There was a time when a hack such as Frank Spearman was considered to be a fine writer because he favored a quite superficial Catholicism, while a great artist like James Joyce was hooted at or condemned because he was critical of things Catholic. This is a most fearful sort of obscurantism — and yet it was the major principle of Catholic criticism, so-called, in this country until some ten years ago.

The high schools and colleges which most of us attended inculcated this principle of criticism in one fashion or another. It was obviously the creation of peculiarly undiscerning people. For when a sensitive and perceptive student or young adult began to realize that the writer condemned as bad was actually one who wrote more accurately and deeply and truly than the writer called good (I use such black-and-white terms only because, in the time I refer to, values were taught to be so colored) that student or adult was likely to have his faith shaken. If our teachers had taken the trouble to explain, as Maritain does in *Art and Scholasticism*, that diabolism sometimes infests the greatest of writers, that it is possible for a man to be at once evil and a great artist, we would not only have understood more about the nature of literature but been better equipped for life.

But no — our teachers indulged their wishful thinking, so that the taste of writers and serious readers who remained in the Church was often confused and emasculated, while a good many others felt that Catholicism was not for them if they were to write honestly or even to read honestly. I need only mention the names of Katherine Anne Porter, Ernest Hemingway, James T. Farrell, and John O'Hara to suggest how many former Catholics are numbered among the top-flight American writers.

2

CATHOLIC teaching has also inhibited the creative process at its sources by the unnecessary degree of rigidity which it imposes on the thought of many of those who reach college. This idea is not my own, but was suggested to me several years ago by a well-known priest who is one of the few pioneers in

attempting to create the conditions which might foster a commensurate Catholic art. If the Church can embrace theologies as different as those of Augustine and Aquinas, if it is able to call both Savonarola and Meister Eckhart Catholic, our colleges should be sufficiently liberal to permit, if not to encourage, a certain amount of speculative thinking. Until recently such was not their practice. Indeed, many of us went through college knowing nothing about the grounds on which the greatest theologians differed, nor even that Thomism was but one of the Catholic systems of thought. This rigidity exists on many levels of Catholic life, and is often justifiable on moral grounds. But not invariably, nor always in the intensity encountered.

The mind, interests, and many of the activities of the creative artist require minimum amounts of freedom and space and an ambience not too inhibiting. If during his formative years it has been impressed upon him that certain areas of thought are forbidden or sneered at, his intellectual or artistic growth may be affected.

It is often said that the Church in the United States has been a mission church until the past decade or two, and as such could not foster the arts. If this excuse for our illiteracy, as it were, was once valid — and at best I think it was worked to death — it no longer is. When we find pastors and their lay confreres paying more money for bad and even dangerous machine-made church art than they would have to pay for honest and original carving by one of an increasing number of distinguished Catholic craftsmen, we have reason to believe that any talk about the inadequacies of mission Catholicism has become merely the excuse for bad habits.

More significant are such influences as those which may stem from Jansenism. It has been said that American Catholics, instead of being taught to fear sin, are taught to be horrified by it. The distinction is a grave one and has many implications. It has also a parallel in what might be called the official attitude of the Church or Catholics toward realistic elements in creative writing. About this a good deal could be said; all I wish to say here is that whether or not a passage of writing may be an occasion of sin depends on a great many variable factors. If we are to impose strictures designed to protect the more susceptible among us, I suggest that in so doing we are liable to create occasions of sin for those who function on another level of intelligence or susceptibility. Whether or not a passage is pornographic depends, first, on the author's intention and, secondly, upon the attitude and susceptibility of the reader. When we impose — with great rolling of eyes and raising of hands — a blanket prohibition on certain kinds of writing, we not only offend the more intelligent but, through our stressing of horror rather than sin, make for an unhealthy interest on the part of those we might

clumsily be trying to protect. (The Hearst papers are old adepts at this; on the very page on which the Hearst crusade for clean literature is being pushed, there may be an ad based on the cheapest sort of sex interest.)

The nice-nellyism of this Catholic attitude toward fine writing both fosters and is a part of the literalism which infests Catholicism in this country. We are so propaganda-minded that we are unable to understand or appreciate the method of implication on which the best contemporary writing is based. The fact is that writers like Alvah Bessie, Hemingway, or Ralph Bates, who use the method of implication, arouse our suspicion if we bother to read them at all — for all three are actively opposed to Franco. . . .

Such provincialism and worse cannot foster an honest or distinguished art. Yet it is the seedbed in which we have attempted to grow a Catholic literature, and after a fashion to encourage Catholic writers. I have dealt with it at length because it is part of the problem for any Catholic attempting to write or paint honestly. It is, as it were, the background problem and there are indications that it is being surmounted. The more special problems may now be enumerated with suitable allowance made for personal bias or lack of objectivity.

3

CATHOLIC writer" is itself an awkward term which is indicative of the manner in which we have made our approach. It is better to say "a writer who happens to be a Catholic" or "a Catholic who happens to be a writer." But the term may be justified as pertaining to a writer who sees things from a Catholic viewpoint, although not to the extent that he subjects truth to expediency or forces it into a pattern. As such he is two things: a Catholic and a writer.

As a writer he shares the many problems of other contemporary writers, whose occupational diseases include peptic ulcers, migraine, adultery, and enlargement of the ego. As a Catholic he is burdened with additional and special problems. I think it best to adumbrate first those which the Catholic writer shares with other writers.

In general his first problem, granting the possession of talent, is an economic one. If he is not a serious writer he may solve this expediently by writing for the radio, or for the pulps, for the slicks, if he is able, or for Hollywood. In these fields he encounters only the ordinary hazards of his own or any profession — changes of policy or editors, old age, and so forth. It is when the writer wishes to write honestly that he encounters to an acute degree the problem of supporting himself. There are various ways of meeting this problem, and one of the most common is for the writer to write honestly at one time and commercially at another.

Sinclair Lewis, J. P. Marquand, and Scott Fitzgerald are among the better-known writers who have had to do this at some time during their lives. Fitzgerald's is the classic tragedy of this way of life. It is in the Fitzgerald symposium, *The Crack-up*, that his friend, John Dos Passos, wrote of the personality problems which this sort of literary double-life makes for. Among them, Dos Passos lists schizophrenia and paralysis of the will. Those who know Fitzgerald's story need be told no more. For the purpose of argument it is needful to say here only that these aberrations were disastrous to Fitzgerald both as a person and as a writer. If anyone wishes to say that had Fitzgerald remained in the Church he might have found the grace to heal himself, I will not argue with him. But I will say that of those few serious American writers who *have* remained in the Church, I can think of not more than one whose life is not marked by tragedy directly related to his special position or calling as a Catholic writer.

No matter with what rhythm a writer alternates his serious writing and his commercial writing, the process of a deliberate withholding and mutation of thought which the latter almost always involves has a pernicious and crippling effect upon both work and personality. His alternatives to this are not writing at all; being fortunate enough — there are not ten such in the United States — to have his serious writing support him; marrying money — I am not being facetious; or doing some other sort of work, such as journalism or teaching, to support himself. This latter course is one which places a severe drain upon a writer's nervous energy, which is after all what he writes with, as someone else might use it to work with a pick and shovel.

That brings us to the second problem which our Catholic writers share with those American writers who are not Catholics: the simple quality of endurance. Writing uses a great deal of nervous energy; indeed, the emaciated physical quality some writers acquire in their later years is noticeable; and contemporary life, particularly as lived in the cities, places a drain upon anyone's nervous energy such as the human body was not intended to endure. It is one of the reasons we have so many one-book novelists and occasional poets. The plain fact is that for the majority of writers today, to write a novel is nothing short of a feat — not of talent or ability but of endurance. Indeed, it is a combination of lack of endurance coupled with economic pressure which often causes a writer to hurry his work, with a consequent failure to make his style as clean, elegant, and rich in implication as it should be.

These are *some* of the problems which the Catholic shares with those writers who are not Catholics. They bring me to the very heart of my polemic: namely, those problems which are special to a man or woman who is at once a writer and a Catho-

lic. It is here that I wish to repeat my disclaimer; I am not mentioning certain matters as propaganda, but as obstacles insuperable, perhaps irremovable, while the writer remains a Catholic.

4

THE first problem for a Catholic writer is that usually he is committed to more children than are non-Catholic writers. The incidence of children among writers is low, and the reason is not in every case mere selfishness. Children add considerably to the pressures on a writer's economies, both nervous and pecuniary. They also enrich his life and contribute to his knowledge, but the plain fact is that few of our major successful writers in the country have what used to be called a family of children.

Secondly, the Catholic writer has a good many psychological problems. He is troubled, depending upon his personality, as to what he may write about and how he may write about it. The sad but inescapable fact is that of those who might be called spiritual directors, almost none has knowledge of the art and craft of narrative writing, or any desire to acquire such knowledge. In short, a young Catholic writer with such a problem would scarcely know which way to turn in his indecision and paralysis of will. It would be good if men like Father John S. Kennedy or Father Leo L. Ward were near to advise and discuss, but it is rarely so. The Catholic writer may be troubled as to whether his work is an occasion of sin, and on this ground he continually encounters conflicts between his art and his religion. Eventually, he resolves this by deciding that if his work is to have a double effect, he wills only the good one; by hoping that more good than harm will result from it; or by deciding that what might be an occasion of sin for some celibates would not be one for married people. If he is married, this may affect his decision, for he may be convinced that married people have gotten pretty cavalier treatment from certain elements in the Church.

Thirdly, the Catholic writer who decides to teach at a Catholic college, instead of interspersing his serious work with potboilers, not uncommonly encounters censorship from the institution with which he is affiliated. Sometimes it is open and clumsy, more often tacit. It is not necessary to mention just how he may be hurt. (However, I do believe that the generally liberalizing influence whose cool breath we have begun to feel in the Church during the past decade is having its effect.)

This in turn brings us to the fourth problem: the rather painful disciplining which a few Catholic writers have encountered. The technique has apparently been borrowed from the Communists, who used it during the twenties and thirties, when certain writers needed regulation. I refer to eco-

nomie sanctions. To put it bluntly, certain Catholic groups, institutions, and organizations have not been above boycotting Catholic writers whose work they did not like, or having them discharged from their positions, or having editorial work taken away from them. I could cite chapter and verse on this but prefer not to do so publicly. Such treatment is particularly cruel where a Catholic writer is concerned, because of those burdens which other writers do not carry.

Fifthly, the necessary tranquillity for creative work is hard to come by in the home of a large family; and an outside workroom or its equivalent cannot always be found or afforded. To readers who may immediately think of Bernanos's six children, I would say that friends of his have told me he often seeks the comparative peace and quiet of a café to do his work.

The sixth problem, also, concerns a subject which many Catholics may find painful. In virtually all the arts and in almost every century young writers, and some not so young, have had patrons. It is an accepted practice in many of the arts — particularly music — for artist and patron often to enter into a close and at times unhealthy relationship. I need hardly add that this is one manner of getting one's work done that is closed to Catholics.

Seventh, divorce is not possible for a Catholic. One of the most common American literary patterns, indeed the most common among the more successful writers, is the practice of taking a second or third wife. This is not wantonly indulged in as often as some of us may think. In any marriage one person is probably going to grow more than the other. If the disparity in growth is great the makings of tragedy are present. We all can think of writers who did their best work while living with the second or third spouse.

Classically and truly, the relation between husband and wife is closely connected with the writer's writing or the painter's painting. Where there is any deep cleavage or serious lack of compatibility the writer's or painter's work is likely to suffer. The Catholic writer will naturally stay with his or her spouse and try to make the best of it; but in a time when sublimation is not the order of the day and is about as misunderstood as anything well could be, the process of making the best of a bad bargain is more apt to be botched than not. Yet Catholics do not generally make good spouses to artists; we are too enamored of economic security and, more so than most Americans, rarely achieve emotional maturity.

These then are *some* of the problems the Catholic writer encounters in our time and in our country. A few of them are obviously insuperable on a natural level. Together they interact, forming a complex, affecting not only the writer's work but the personalities of both himself and his immediate family. I do not think there is a remedy. That

widening and deepening of Catholic culture which might place Catholic artists under less pressure is nothing that can be achieved either quickly or through the employment of mechanical and entirely conscious means. A few things might be remedied, and in this connection I should like to mention that the most vicious critics a serious Catholic writer encounters are not non-Catholics, nor those sorry bumblerers who do reviews for diocesan weeklies, but rather the literary lights dotting every Catholic campus, who know what a rich and complex subject Catholicism is for the writer but who lack the endurance, talent, or courage to undertake the arduous task of writing about it; yet they are always ready with convenient misinterpretations, half-truths, and outright lies to attack those who have ventured where they have not dared to tread.

5

WHETHER a system of subsidies to help Catholic writers would help, I seriously doubt. That special brand of nepotism which is the bane of the Catholic press would doubtless be all-present in the administration of any fund for Catholic artists. Nor do I feel that properly qualified people would be chosen to do the administering. I strongly feel that the people delegated to handle such a fund would have little real knowledge of what creative writing is, and, like their predecessors in the diocesan press, would think of literature strictly in terms of propaganda. In this connection, let me tell a story about a lady who, although somewhat confused, has accomplished a deal of good work toward disencumbering Catholic writing in America. I was in Latin America with my family, and received an air-mail letter from her. She was rather excited over a plan for the subsidization of Catholic writers. She was one of those called upon to help formulate the method and she had written to me for advice. "What we want to do," she wrote, in almost her last sentence, "is to help Catholic writers to have more babies."

I wrote back that the Catholic writers I knew didn't seem to have much difficulty having babies; what they needed was some honorable arrangement through which they could write more books. Our relationship has never been quite the same since. The incident — and this woman is neither unintelligent nor unperceptive — is typical of what I feel would be the way subsidies to Catholic writers would be handled. In addition, I feel that any system of subsidization would tend to favor the most extreme conformists, and yet the better creative writers are not noted for their conformism.

A group of Catholics in the East, who also indulge in a somewhat small-boyish sort of mysteriousness, have offered very substantial prizes for Catholic books. Yet their public and private utterances reveal them as no more than semi-literate, propaganda-minded to a degree, and contentious. It is easy to imagine the book their five-figure prize will go to.

And a gentleman with an equal lack of preparation for his task — surely one of our especial Catholic vices — began a non-profit literary venture in the Middle West. By and for amateurs, the enterprise would be a joke if it were not persisted in at a time when the Church in the United States, and especially its culture, show some indications of emerging from the denigration and obscurantism which infested them for decades. The gentleman was, I believe, a successful banker. If we should ask him why he did not start a non-profit bank instead, he would think us unreasonable. And yet he obviously must know a good deal about banking and just as obviously knows nothing about writing. There is also, I believe, some need for a non-profit bank.

This lack of preparation which I say is a peculiarly Catholic vice in this country is related to that Angelism which we see around us in various aspects of Catholic life. Say a Hail Mary, write a story, and sell it to *Cosmopolitan* (everyone knows the Hearst papers go for things Catholic). Say a Pater, paint a picture, and sell it to Father O'Duffy for the altar. That's the sort of preparation many Catholics make for the venture into a woefully complicated and arduous profession. I feel also that the lack of preparation is somehow related to a lack of purity of intention. If one prepares at length, sooner or later one must encounter one's intention and know it for what it is. And where Catholics lack that purity of intention they become a laughingstock or something more tragic. I am thinking here not only of what we call our literature but of such facts as that where there has been slum ownership — *in absentia*, of course — by Church groups in Madrid and in New York, again and again brothels have been established in those properties. And I am thinking of how the lady selected by her pastor or the director of her sodality to speak publicly against birth control almost invariably is childless or nearly so. If the reader thinks I have overstated the case, I feel that for the most part I have understated it. We Catholics are great people for the letter of the law, but the spirit seems to have withered within us — and it is with and from the spirit that any honest or serious art must flow.



juvenile reading that makes him unable to forget popular song lyrics, punch lines from old stage plays, and much good and bad poetry. Uninspiring though his reading list may have seemed to him, it launched him on a long and successful writing career. He now takes his ease each Friday night as a member of the "Information Please" radio team — and for that matter, throughout the rest of the week as well.

LITERARY MEMORIES

by FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

I

IN Chicago in 1896, I was a student at Armour Institute, 33rd Street and Armour Avenue. Chicago has grown stylish since those days, for the Institute, founded by Philip Danforth Armour, the side-whiskered packer, had the Avenue — now, forsooth, Federal Street — named for him too. And the once redolent South Water Street — which smelled prettier than a dozen Washington Markets — is now Wacker Drive, named for Mr. Wacker, who in my day was a partner in the Wacker & Birk Brewing and Malting Company.

Armour Institute — now Illinois Institute of Technology — was about a mile and a half from our house on Grand Boulevard, a tough walk in the winter, a few minutes' ride on my Barnes White Flyer in the autumn and spring.

At Armour, from 1895 to 1899, we had four years of Latin, four of mathematics, lots of chemistry and physics — lectures and laboratory work — four years of German, and three months of English, devoted to Chaucer.

So I read at home. Years before, when I was still in grammar school (Douglas) I had read, in the following order, all of Harry Castlemon, Horatio Alger, Jr., Oliver Optic, and G. A. Henty. But by 1895, in my early simultaneous quadratic period, I began to read the so-called — so called by my father — standard works.

On our library table, next to our beautiful yellow-globed kerosene lamp, were Owen Meredith's *Lucile* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* with the Doré illustrations. Of those pictures, one made me happy: "The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide, and I am next of kin" — a wedding feast picture. But one frightened me even more than "The albatross about my neck was hung." That was "Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs upon the slimy sea." It still frightens me.

But far worse, when I was fifteen, was a book whose title — if it had any — I forget. It was given away, I imagine, as an advertisement for Dr.

Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. One picture showed "The effects of alcohol on the human stomach." We used to have a bottle of claret on the dinner table, and I was allowed to have a medicine dropper of it in a glass, diluted with water and sugar. After reading the Dr. Pierce book, I became a teetotaler for five years. And I pictured my father's stomach — a horrible-looking affair. Not only was he Crazy with Wine, but also his intestinal tract was slowly rotting. I would sneak to the sideboard and drink maple syrup neat, from a silver pitcher that we kept the syrup in. We had pancakes Wednesday mornings. Sundays — my father was born in Boston — we had alternately codfish balls and baked beans, and scraped steak with a lot of raw eggs on top. It makes me hungry now to write of those Sunday breakfasts. My current Sunday breakfast comprises canned grapefruit juice and corn flakes.

What frightened me most, however, about Old Dr. Pierce's "No Detention from Business — Throw Away That Truss" book was the long article about Angina Pectoris. I was — perhaps like most boys — open to suggestion. Little did I know that the patent medicine book was based on the psychology of fear, so I went to the doctor to ask him to tell me the truth about my angina. He laughed at the idea that a fifteen-year-old boy could have it, but he gave me a stethoscopic examination — I doubt that the cardiograph was used in the nineties. Well, I didn't have it, and I was grateful to him for not asking how I had got that strange idea.

I abandoned the book, but Mr. Charles Eseman, our grocer, gave us *The Life of U. S. Grant*. I read it, skipping, and I recall none of it. But under the library table were two large books, *The Soldier in Our Civil War*. I remember many of the photographs of officers — Elmer E. Ellsworth with the Zouaves, John A. Logan, Ambrose E. Burnside, George Brinton McClellan, Braxton Bragg, John A. McClelland, James Ewell Brown Stuart, Buell,

Pickett, Admirals Porter and Farragut and Dahlgren — I wonder what became of those fascinating books. Also we had a book of Civil War songs, many of which I knew, for we used to march around Room 22 singing "Marching Through Georgia" and "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp." Little did I dream then that I would have children whose maternal great-grandfather, George F. Root, had written not only "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" but also "The Battle Cry of Freedom," "The Vacant Chair," and "Just Before the Battle, Mother." I still remember the words and music of those war songs. In Room 15 — Miss Laura E. Hull's Room 15 — we had a song whose authorship I never knew. But it seems to me now that we sang it often. It ran: —

Night winds are mournfully sweeping;
Whispering oak branches wave
Where your loved comrades are sleeping —
Home of the true and the brave.
Silence reigns breathless around you;
All your stern conflicts are o'er.
Deep is the sleep that has bound you —
Trumpet shall rouse you no more.

And in September, at the opening of school, we sang "Robin Redbreast," by William Allingham. The song began "Good-by, Good-by to Summer!" and ended: —

Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

And it seems to me that most of the kids giggled at the lines: —

The trees are Indian princes,
And soon they'll turn to ghosts.

I never heard that tune again until, at Ann Arbor, many years later, I heard the students sing: —

'Tis of Michigan we sing,
With a merry, merry ring —

and then I discovered that it was an old French marching song, called "I'm a Soldier Now, Lizette."

2

ANOTHER book that was prominently displayed on the library table was Bryant's *Library of Poetry and Song*. It was divided into categories — Sentiment and Reflection, Nature, and so forth. The only department I read, and reread, was the Humorous and Satirical. It had Bret Harte; it had Gilbert's "The Yarn of the *Nancy Bell*." I have read in books of reminiscence about those Friday afternoon school recitations; that must have been Before My Time. At any rate, we didn't have 'em, nor were we nurtured on McGuffey. No, we had Appleton's Readers, from the First to the Fifth inclusive; Swinton's Word Book, which was light blue; Robinson's Arithmetic, which was maroon; and Barnes's *History of the United States*,

which was light brown with gilt letters, and the ostentatious carrying of which told all the school kids that you incontrovertibly were in the eighth grade. At graduation we sang "The breaking waves dashed high on a stern and rock-bound coast." It was "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers." I sang bass; and it wasn't until one of my children sang it at school that I knew what the air was. We basses sang so loud that we couldn't hear the sopranos.

We had footnotes in the history. One was to the effect that Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga said, "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." It remained for a comparatively recent investigator, Mr. Stewart Holbrook, in *Ethan Allen*, to tell what he actually said at the Fort, which was "Open up, you British sons of bitches!" Also that Allen's last words were, when a minister came to him and said, "General, the angels are waiting," "God damn 'em, let 'em wait."

The big bookcase had four glass doors, and in it were many sets of books, and some then current novels, my mother being a reader of same. Among them were Jessie Fothergill's *The First Violin*, du Maurier's *Trilby*, Margaret Deland's *John Ward, Preacher*, Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis?*, E. L. Voynich's *The Gadsby*, and I don't know how many more. Our sets were Dickens, Thackeray, Balzac, Hawthorne, Bret Harte, and George Eliot. Not to add the Waverley novels. I read all the Scott novels in the order of their appearance in the bookcase; all of Dickens except *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. I know I couldn't have read that, for I am reading it now, and it is all new. I was too young for Thackeray.

I read *Black Beauty*, and I was certain for a month or two that all the horses that passed our house on Grand Boulevard were driven by cruel, selfish men.

As I have said, in my grammar school days I had read Harry Castlemon's books — *Frank Before Vicksburg*, *Frank on a Gunboat*, and *Frank on the Lower Mississippi*; also the Sportsman's Club series and the Rocky Mountain series. But my first heroes were Frank Nelson and his cousin Archie Winters. Castlemon's name was Fosdick, and his nephews, Harry Emerson Fosdick and Raymond B. Fosdick; and in Westfield, Chautauqua County, New York, where the Fosdicks lived, Harry Castlemon was a writer of stories for boys, which wasn't so far above the strolling player of the seventeenth century. "He refused to go to church," said Raymond Fosdick. "As I recall him after all these years, I think perhaps he was the most human specimen our family has produced."

After Castlemon I read Horatio Alger, Jr., and Oliver Optic, with rapt attention. I never dreamed that they were written on a formula, the formula of Cinderella materialism: that if you were truthful, honest, and shined the rich man's shoes, sold him

papers, or carried his grip — “Smash your baggage, sir?” The speaker was a bright boy of fourteen years of age.” Almost always the hero was from one to five years older than the reader. I liked every one of them.

I bought the Alger books — Street & Smith published them at 15 cents a volume — for my children: *Ragged Dick*, *Tattered Tom*, *Phil, the Fiddler*. They soon were bored. “Pa, they’re all alike.” So they listened to even more infantile stuff, with more obvious and cheaper thrills in one radio program than there are for them in the whole of Alger. In the childhood when my older boys, now finding no thrill at all at college, found no fun in Alger, they were listening to “Dick Tracy” and “Junior G-Men.”

Another book we had was *Kings of the Platform and Pulpit*. I never read any of the sermons of H. W. Beecher or Thomas De Witt Talmage. But I thought that the excerpts of Josh Billings, Artemus Ward, Eli Perkins, and B. P. Shillaber were highly comical. I have feared to reread any of them, but I have a notion that Billings and Ward had something a trifle imperishable about them.

The bookcase was in the front parlor. We had perhaps 800 books, most of which I read. Nowadays I have about 8000 books, and all the bookcases are open, and my children are welcome to read

any or all. Their literary tastes are better than mine was. Last month, for example, Tim, nineteen, was reading Thackeray’s *Yellowplush Papers*. His comment was, “Hey, reminds me a little of Ring Lardner.”

Today I couldn’t reread Scott. I can, and do, reread Dickens. I don’t remember ever having read any of Thackeray except *Pendennis*, which at fifteen I didn’t finish reading.

My children can’t read Dickens. They say that he’s too verbose. But they went to the movie of *David Copperfield*; and now that my young daughter has seen the film *Great Expectations* twice, she is fascinated by the book, and tells me that they left out a lot of stuff in the movie.

Children don’t read Scott, except when *Ivanhoe* is required in the eighth grade, as *Silas Marner* is in some year or other of secondary school.

Well, although Scott has completely vanished from our own and most other private libraries, *Ivanhoe* (it may have been an excerpt in one of those Appleton’s Readers) — some of it — returns. *Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit*: —

“My grandsire drew a good bow at Hastings.”

“The foul fiend on thy grandsire and all his generation.”

“In the clout, in the clout! A Hubert forever!”

Who said I don’t remember?

“I PERSONALLY” AWARDS

FROM the first the *Atlantic* has earned the reputation of being hospitable to new writers. Acting on the principle that anyone of intelligence has a good story to tell, the *Atlantic* editors have brought into print a succession of autobiographical narratives, true stories of men and women who have shared with their generation the truth, the humor, and the beauty of a remarkable experience.

There was Mary Antin, the impassioned immigrant who spoke for millions in her touching account of “The Promised Land”; there was Hans Coudenhove, a Viennese nobleman who, after the First World War, renounced his title to live as a hermit in deepest Africa. There was that remarkable quartet of valiant “primitives”: Lucy Furman and Olive Tilford Dargan, who wrote so tellingly of the Southern mountaineers; Eleanor Risley, operating — on a shoestring — her apple orchard in the

Ozarks; and far north, Hilda Rose on her Stump Farm. Bill Adams and Hugo Johanson sent us their salty stories of the sea. There was Nora Waln in the House of Exile, Agnes Newton Keith in North Borneo, and Betty MacDonald on her incomparable Egg Farm. Every one of them broke into print in the *Atlantic*.

The *Atlantic* would like to encourage more of such stories — stories which are drawn from experience and veritable in detail. For the three best autobiographical narratives submitted between now and June 1, 1948, we shall pay \$1000 each. These awards are not intended for war material, and fiction will be disqualified. The narratives may be as short as 2000 words or as long as 7000; they may be written by an amateur or by a professional writer. On page 1 the contestant should write, “For the I Personally Award.” — THE EDITORS

THE ATLANTIC Bookshelf



THE *Peripatetic* Reviewer

BY
EDWARD
WEEKS

A REVIEWER of twenty years, I should by this time be calloused enough not to mind it when an American publisher goes overboard for a mediocre novel. The announcement that *The Lady of the Iron Corset*, a Great Historical Romance of the Crusades, is to be backed by an initial advertising appropriation of \$40,000, the full-page reviews which celebrate its debut, and the whipped cream ejaculations which make up the ensuing copy should not irk me. But they do. Last August, in a reference to the *New York Times Book Review*, I made the mistake of confusing the publisher's ballyhoo with the function of a critic.

The *Times* has been the Bible of the book trade for as long as I have been in publishing. Its integrity in the handling of the new books does not deserve reproach. If I intended to censure anyone, it should have been those publishers who oversell the mediocre. But even here, in the face of rising costs, I find myself forgiving. For if a publisher cannot make a profit, he must cease to publish even the best books which come his way.

Airways and airports

The planting and encouraging of the manuscripts for our Anniversary began early last spring, and the harvest, so bountiful that we shall need not one but several issues to hold it, kept me in New England until the leaves had turned. Then, with November in press, I took to the airways and headed west.

Detroit's airport is wholly in character, a converted airplane plant at Willow Run, one of those vast but identifiable buildings which Detroit's great architect, the late Albert Kahn, invented to house the assembly line. It was Kahn's responsibility to provide acres of unimpeded floor space; with his genius he developed a wall strength as dependable as the flying buttress, and swept the floor clean of pillars, struts, and partitions.

As the plane comes down for its landing, the big Kaiser-Frazer operation flashes by your window and behind, rising out of the smoke and sunlight, the almost limitless vista of the Rouge plant of Ford. Detroit lives with a single-minded competitive spirit I do not find in any other town: it lives, breathes, and talks motors, and today the atmosphere is tense as the city makes ready for what one man called "the biggest World Series in American industry" — the oncoming battle between Ford and Chevrolet.

Most airports wear an improvised look, as if they had been set down in the nearest deserted field and expected to move next year. The exception to this is the National Airport in Washington. Its curved glass walls and its long runways built on the bank of the Potomac make it the loveliest air terminal in North America. Compared with Washington the Chicago Airport is just a whistle stop, a half-built station in the midst of cinders, with fifty minutes of red lights between you and the nearest comfortable hotel. (The first Chicagoan who builds an overnight hostel at the airfield, with comfortable beds and good food, will earn our thanks and make his fortune.)

Chicago's hotels are the most crowded in the land, and the new habit of tipping the room clerk for a room before you are given your reservation is a form of Middle West inflation which I hope will not spread. Curious how every town in the country continues to be crowded. "Where do they ever come from?" asks the native, but in asking he forgets how much Americans love to convene. Conventions were ruled out during the war; now they are making up for lost time everywhere. When at last I reached my corner room and stood listening to the wind and looking out over the Lake, I realized again how well Chicago has enhanced the shore line and those water rights which so many of our other cities have defiled.

South by west

We flew from Chicago to Dallas in three hours and forty minutes. The flight was far steadier than many of our Eastern roadbeds; the intelligent courtesy of the airlines is in marked distinction to the indifference of so many train crews, and the tray of food which the hostess places on your lap without charge or tip sets a standard which the diner would do well to follow. The selection of food is inviting and the portions just enough to subdue but not to overstuff the appetite. The trays are empty when

they go back: there is none of the gluttonous waste which one sees in so many American restaurants and trains. I wonder how many American railway executives are aware of this invidious comparison.

After flying above the clouds at 350 m.p.h. it was pleasant to stand idly in the soft Texas sunlight watching a group of pilots change the tire of their old jalopy. Texans, like Detroiters, think nothing of space; they think nothing of driving eighty miles to see a movie in the next town and home again before midnight, and so many private planes flew in to see the big game at Austin that the traffic problem at the airport took three hours to unravel. Dallas, Fort Worth, Tyler — these big ever growing cities whose homes with their long low lines and broad windows reach out to the prairies, and whose city blocks have a brightness untouched by soot, are as new, exuberant, and hospitable as any place in America. And more than most.

At Tyler, Texas, where they had just crowned their Rose Queen, I saw the thousand of acres that make this the rose capital of the world, met the man who had bred the thorns out of the American Beauties, and marveled at the huge trailers which convoy thousands of buds each week to the department stores in New Orleans, Omaha, or Chicago. At Oklahoma City, as the harvest moon rose against the lemon sky, I saw the oil wells which to an incredible number have risen out of Negro shacks, beside the State Capitol, and which poise over the wealthiest residences. There was no smell of oil, as there is of chocolate in Hershey, Pennsylvania; but as I heard the stories of the law courts and of how the royalties had been prorated throughout the neighborhood, as I saw the evidence of new wealth that had come to white and Negro, I wondered who would write the novel that cries out to be written about Oklahoma.

At Bartlesville I tipped my hat to the first well to be drilled in the Territory. The well, which now has a plaque to mark it, is five years younger than I am and still working. And at Bartlesville I shook hands with Frank Phillips, one of the earliest and most colorful of the Oklahoma oilmen, and was taken to visit his great ranch, Woolaroc, which lies outside of town. In the large native-stone museum, he has assembled, with the assistance of his friends, the Indian tribes, and the University of Oklahoma, a collection which breathes the story, the archaeology, and in the paintings of Charles Russell, Remington and Leigh, the visible beauty of the Plains. For three hours I was lost in another time, emerging with the thought that here is one way, and a fine way, for local wealth to repay itself to the people.

Six thousand miles in twenty-nine days, with twenty-two lectures and many a question period before and after. The finest plane that I flew in was the DC-6; the most comfortable and best-fed train was the Pere Marquette, No. 5, out of Detroit for

Lansing and Grand Rapids; the best restaurant, the Dolores in Oklahoma City. Wherever I went I found a friendliness and anxiety, a rising sense of responsibility for what is going on abroad, a rising feeling of resentment towards the interference of Russia, and an outspoken apprehension as to whether we are resourceful enough to do the job the world expects.

What do the Russians really want?

A measure of the deep anxiety of this country is indicated by the insatiable demand for *Speaking Frankly* by James F. Byrnes. The book cannot be kept in print: there are not — as yet — enough copies for those Americans who remember the enormous deposit of good will toward Soviet Russia which existed in the country two years ago, and who want to know how and why Stalin, Molotov, and Vishinsky have drawn on it almost to the point of bankruptcy.

When Mr. Byrnes became Secretary of State in July, 1945, Russia had already begun to voice her suspicions of us. At the Yalta Conference in February of that year, Mr. Byrnes had first witnessed the negotiations between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. He observed the President's mediation in the disagreement which arose over the Polish border, and the President's acceptance, "as a basis for discussion," of the Soviet's enormous demand of twenty billion dollars for reparations. Later, as Secretary of State, he was to be baffled by the Soviet's determination to interpret in its favor anything that was tentative; he was to conclude that the Soviet leaders overestimated the ultimate extent of the President's — and therefore of our — willingness to compromise on matters of principle.

Mr. Byrnes was good-natured; he was skilled and experienced in reaching agreement by the American way; he was patient, yet when aroused could put it on the line. But he was untried as a diplomat, and although he had the able team of Ben Cohen, Doc Matthews, and Chip Bohlen to help him, he was not used to the accusing and stubborn resourcefulness of Molotov. It shocked him to discover that Stalin, despite the previous agreements, remained contemptuous of the smaller states and almost implacable in his belief that "the three [great] powers would represent the interests of all." Mr. Byrnes began to realize at Potsdam Stalin's determination to regain those territories that had been lost by the Czar and during the Revolution, and he was progressively angered by the Soviet habit in Eastern Europe of acting first and arguing afterwards. In this accounting to the American people the red, the negative, figures bulk large. It is disillusioning to see what has happened in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania despite the supposed agreements on "free elections."

Yet the record is not without its reasonable hope. Mr. Byrnes may have broken the rules of secret

diplomacy in taking the people so much into his confidence, but I am glad that he did, for there is a prairie fire of fearful thinking now sweeping the country which can only be checked by the patience, the firm reasonableness, and the human nature which come through these pages. It is important that Americans should realize that the foreign policy of the Politburo is no new thing. It is, as Mr. Byrnes points out, the same policy practiced by the Czars and defined by Marx in his articles for the New York *Tribune* in 1853.

In the face of this policy, it is reassuring to know that when the American point of view was candidly explained to Stalin, he did not hesitate to overrule Molotov publicly. It is reassuring to be reminded that the Soviet's move in Iran was stopped by the first decisive test of the UN. It is reassuring to have Mr. Byrnes tell us how, after the interminable, exhausting wrangle at Paris, Mr. Molotov suddenly reversed the Russian position on the Dodecanese and gave in to our side, and how he later side-stepped the issue of Trieste. It is fascinating to be given these pen portraits of the Russian leaders and to be told that Stalin "is a very likeable person." And it is encouraging to read in his Introduction "that if it were possible to give the people of this world an actual, rather than a figurative, seat at the peace conference table, the fears and worries that now grip our hearts would fade away."

Treason and complacency

Ever since the Blitz the meaning of treason has been drummed into the ears of the British. Night after night the penetrating voice of William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw) underscored their suffering with mockery and the prophecy of doom. Among many others, this stirred the indignation of **Rebecca West**, whose prose hits harder than that of any other living Englishwoman. At the war's end we learned in the pages of the *New Yorker* that she had turned her thoughts toward the traitors, the British complacency which had encouraged them before the war, the motives which finally took them abroad, and the trials which were to bring them to their end. *The Meaning of Treason* is a dramatic book, a book of deep and ugly probing, a book in which conscience, anger, and the lancet's edge are employed to lay bare the motives and the madness of the turncoats, and the reasons why Law in the last resort sent them to the gallows.

In the reading, an American cannot help being impressed by the colorful tradition and the magnificent vitality of English Law in action.

To understand a traitor we must begin with the frustration, the bitterness, the revolution, which made him turn against his own. To her characterization of William Joyce, Miss West brings the full power of her coruscating analysis. She shows us this little man, born in Brooklyn of Irish parents, who, until his neck was in the British noose,

denied his American allegiance; she shows this bright, slippery adolescent at sixteen spying for the Black and Tan in Ireland, and on the strength of this espionage applying for admission to the Officers' Training Corps; she shows us his failure as a student of science but his quickening facility in literature and history; she tells of how he loved to speak in public and of how he was drawn irresistibly to the British Fascists in 1923; she reminds us of his rise to be the Deputy of Sir Oswald Mosley and his Director of Propaganda, and of how, when he finally fought with his chief, his only outlet was to turn to Hitler for the recognition which Britain continually denied him.

In her picture of the little English Hitlers and the lunatic fringe, Miss West is writing with the diamond edge. The British Fascists she terms "a charade representing the word 'barricade.'" She speaks of William Joyce "in his curious, scrubby, spirited, ugly way." She refers to the "long, sterile orgasm of the Nuremberg Rally"; she speaks of John Amery and "his inhabiting devil"; she calls Norman Baillie-Stewart the "ideal Guardee of Ouida's dreams," and says, "He was one of the oddest of these odd fish, though very dull, and in his sentence the legal wheel turned full circle and, making an innovation, arrived at the archaic."

But this is much more than a record of personalities, the eccentric and treacherous. It is a study of the due process of law and of how that due process failed to convict the Nazi agents before the war, in part because of the complacency of the British magistrates and in part because people resisted the Jew-baiting and the Fascist taunts. The Jews and the Communists hit out, and in most cases were locked up for assault, whereas the little mobsters, the provocators like Joyce, went scot-free. Miss West leaves no doubt of the provocation of the Fascist meetings, and only a little as to the identity of the English industrialists who backed them. Her reports of the early trials, as of those later ones which ended in execution, are observant, intuitive, and best of all, grounded in knowledge. "The law," she sternly reminds us, "like art, is always vainly racing to catch up with experience. Life is always unpredictable. . . . It is the task of judges and legislators to alter the law that it may cope with these capers of time."

RAOUL DE ROUSSY DE SALES

by RAYMOND SWING

The diaries of Raoul de Roussy de Sales (*The Making of Yesterday*, Reynal & Hitchcock, \$4.50) were ended by his untimely death in December, 1942, but de-

spite covering only the period from Munich to the North African campaign, they make notable contributions to the understanding of our era. They give a striking picture of the confusions and weaknesses which marked the approach of the United States to participation in the war; they contain comments on the nature of America and of France that have permanent value for their penetration and observation; and they convey a feeling of the overriding force of world events in a climax which makes a truthful onlooker, borne forward by them, aware of his insignificance and helplessness.

M. de Sales was New York correspondent of *Paris-Soir* and diplomatic correspondent of the Agence Havas. Hence for a time his diaries reveal him as a journalist at work, which is exciting while it lasts. But this illusion of having a chair in the wings of history is brief. For one thing, the writer was soon to be in his sickroom, reduced to his own speculations. For another, history was preparing a greater event than he foresaw, the victory of 1945.

Today's reader has the advantage over the diarist, for he knows the outcome of the great struggle. But this is only a deceptive advantage. For today's reader by now has forgotten the weaknesses and confusions of the past, and does not sufficiently appreciate that the victory of 1945 was no final culmination, since the war has produced no peace. We still live in a time when a truthful onlooker must be aware of his insignificance and helplessness. The strengths which made the American contribution to victory possible must continue the struggle with the weaknesses which always have beset this nation. For while victory was won by strengths it also was the product of incalculable international coöperation which now is gone.

There is an unintentional parallel between the present and the months after Munich when this diary starts. The diarist, in being utterly baffled, still has the advantage over the contemporary reader. "So, although the war may be only a few days or weeks off," he wrote in August, 1939, "one reaches the singular conclusion that it is inconceivable because it is potentially too dangerous. No population is psychologically ready, and the peace that will follow the war — except in the event of a German victory — is equally hard to imagine. We arrive at two mathematically certain and contradictory results. The natural course of events leads straight to war. But war is not possible." Such words describe the strain of world relations today as accurately as that of 1939.

A critic may be tempted to discount M. de Sales for being negative. He was so negative that after the fall of France he could not bring himself for many months to join the de Gaulle movement, a reluctance that now is being vindicated by the development of de Gaulle's relations to his times. But this negativeness was not any spiritual denial. It was the acknowledgment of helplessness. A de-

cadent France, an America too long adolescent, a Russia no less stupid, provided him no cause, other than the negative one of the defeat of Hitler. He did not dull his own sharp sense of right and wrong, loyalty and civilization. On the contrary, these kept him aloof.

Writing at the end of the decade in 1939 he remarked that the principal lesson of the ten years was that they provided a remarkable demonstration of how little effect political leaders have on the evolution of events. "Not one of the problems that existed in 1929 has been solved," he said. And he noted in May, 1942: "The greatest catastrophe which one could imagine, outside of a sudden German victory, would be that the war should stop tomorrow, even with the defeat of Germany. Never were people less ready to make peace. Never had they fewer ideas on this subject." Looking ahead, he said of America: "No country is more convinced than this one that she is right, or is more arrogant in her moral superiority. If she intervenes in the affairs of the world it will be to impose her ideas, and she will consider her intervention a blessing for lost and suffering humanity. The prospect is cheerless. . . . I hope I shall not live to see this epoch of humanitarian businessmen and preaching farmers. I know that everything is threatened and one must choose between various menaces. The American menace is the least terrifying. I prefer Henry Wallace, Dorothy Thompson and Harry Luce, and even, if one wants, Hoover, to the mildest of Axis protagonists; but a world dominated by the present American elite is rather frightening."

M. de Sales early in 1939 saw what was happening to France. "Fascism in France," he wrote, "will have a defeatist basis. The Fascist elements — Laval, Flandin, Bonnet and the 'right thinking' people — prefer the neutralization of France to the risk of war which might bring them what they call communism. . . . They see no serious inconvenience in taking orders from Berlin which would support them in their desire to suppress workers' liberties, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and which would encourage and sanctify anti-Semitism. In other words the terrain is favorable and pre-Fascism exists, but if it develops . . . it will be a nationalist movement of retreat. Patriotism will insist in abdicating, in letting the house burn on pretext of saving the furniture."

His comments on America were arresting. He observed the fundamental anti-Europeanism in this country, which he considered sometimes as being the cornerstone of Americanism. Because the American came from Europe, he has to rationalize his motives for leaving. If he or his ancestors left Europe it was because Europe was a damned and condemned continent. "If he did not say that," wrote M. de Sales, "he would lose faith in himself and in the destiny of America. To be American is an act of faith. America is a country in which one

must believe. It is not necessary to believe in France in order to be French."

Probing deeper into the nature of America, he marked two fundamental and contradictory characteristics. One is a pronounced taste for personal change, the other an aversion to social change. "Change for the sake of change," he wrote, "whether it be the house, the woman, the career, or the President, is considered good in itself, and efficacious, preventing the individual from bogging down in a deadly routine. . . . But in opposition to this one finds in nearly all Americans an incredible attachment to old ideas, a narrow, quasi-superstitious individualism, an inordinate fear of everything which is new and unexpected. . . . America has not invented a political idea for 150 years and she raises a wall of resistance which has the thickness of a century and a half of dogmatism against all innovation. Now the new ideas come from Europe. But as soon as they reach here, they call them 'isms.' Compared to the American, the European is an adventurous and prodigiously daring being. . . . In America there is no revolution possible — except the first one."

Anyone who enjoys trenchant criticism of his country, and anyone who can bear to relive the untriumphant years before victory, or who is willing to face the fact that these days of the so-called peace are equally dangerous, will profit from these diaries. It should be added that Walter Millis provides for the book a wholly sympathetic and adequate introduction.

CIVIL WAR SCRAPBOOK

by RICHARD E. DANIELSON

WHEN he is not conjuring up sinister theories of plots and conspiracies in and out of Lincoln's Cabinet, Otto Eisenschiml, one of the editors of *The American Iliad* (Bobbs-Merrill, \$5.00), is a competent student and historian of the Civil War period. This reviewer is not familiar with the previous publications of the other editor of this "Epic Story of the Civil War," but Ralph Newman is described as a Civil War expert and collector, moving spirit in Chicago's famous Civil War Round Table. Between them, Mr. Eisenschiml and Mr. Newman have attempted to collect, select, digest, and present firsthand documents arranged to tell a coherent story of the Civil War. They have wisely chosen to use far more material from the pens of private soldiers and civilians than usually appears in a military history. They have digested strategical discussions to their simplest terms; and if they quote the Olympian words of a commanding general, they also quote the opinions of men in the ranks describing the same operation. The result is readable and varied and often vivid.

The task of letting the actors in that great drama tell their own stories was bravely undertaken back in the eighties by Robert Underwood Johnson, and was carried by him to brilliant fulfillment in the ever memorable *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*. But Mr. Johnson's work appeared in four large volumes, while Mr. Eisenschiml and Mr. Newman have confined themselves to one volume of some 690 pages.

Obviously a comparison between the two efforts, however inevitable, would be quite unfair. The present editors have had at their disposal a very considerable amount of valuable and fruitful memoirs, journals, letters, and histories which have appeared since the publication of *Battles and Leaders* and, with certain surprising omissions, they have made good use of these new sources. (Incidentally, I failed to see a reference to *Battles and Leaders* in this volume except as a listing in the Bibliography.) Their book is given a more human and democratic touch by the liberal use of the thoughts of combat soldiers and officers, which Mr. Johnson in the grander manner of his day would often have relegated to footnotes in small type.

The editors state in their Foreword that they have adjusted the style and presentation of their material, sometimes changing the third person to the first, and otherwise editing the text, but they profess that "in no case, however, have we tampered with the meaning of our source material, nor have we distorted it in any way whatsoever." This method of editing, in which alterations of original text are not indicated, will shock conventional historians. It is probably a dangerous and could easily become a pernicious practice. It is permissible only when frankly admitted and employed in the making of a "popular" rather than a "serious" history.

In presenting their material the editors have not succeeded in finding the happiest physical solution for differentiating between their running editorial comment and the source material. No quotation marks are used, and unless the reader pays the strictest attention, he is never quite sure whether he is reading Eisenschiml and Newman or the words of a midshipman on the *Merrimac*. Putting the editorial comment in italics would perhaps be visually tedious, and no easy solution is apparent; but one cannot help feeling that the editors have not employed the full range of typographical ingenuity. The maps, which are never elaborate, are easy to read and adequate for their purposes.

Just why the editors use the words "Iliad" and "Epic" in the title of their book is not apparent. If they have succeeded in presenting in readable form, from contemporary sources, a fair picture of how the Civil War was fought and what fighting in it was like — no small achievement in a single volume — they have failed to convey the

emotion and the passion in the minds and spirit of the men and women who lived through that dreadful struggle. There is little or none of that dark poetry which stirred almost unbearably in the souls of men, nor of that mystical exaltation which produced the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" or the "Commemoration Ode." Perhaps it is too much to ask for complete realism and poetry as well, but an American Iliad is more than the story of campaigns and mud and wounds and lice and death. If it is an epic, it must have, somewhere in it, epic poetry.

There is a blind spot in the vision of nearly all editors or writers of Civil War material. They cannot understand, because they themselves are so familiar with the facts, that the layman of today is completely ignorant of even the simplest infantry tactics and terms employed in warfare eighty-odd years ago. Most readers certainly do not know just what is meant by a line of battle, or how a column is deployed into line, or how two or more ranks could fire without blowing one another's ears off. Unless these elemental tactics are understood, readers cannot appreciate the terror of being flanked which appears in the story of every battle.

The theoretical and actual function and employment of field artillery, the range and nature of their missiles — all these matters could be explained in a few introductory paragraphs without insulting anyone's intelligence and with enormous benefit to the "general reader." Too often he would be puzzled to explain the difference between a Brigade and a Division, and his mental picture of what happened when "Sedgwick hurled his corps on Longstreet's center and right" is surely in the nature of abstract painting. Is it too much to hope that sometime an editor or an historian will remember that not all his readers are exact students of extinct military tactics and of the use of obsolete weapons.

ACROSS THE WIDE MISSOURI \$10.00

Bernard DeVoto

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

BERNARD DEVOTO's investigation of the origins and growth of what he calls the "continental mind" has been persistent and brilliant. *Mark Twain's America* displayed Manifest Destiny in its peak years, the period closed and symbolized by the meeting of the rails at Promontory. *The Year of Decision* went back in time to trace the complex lines of force that in 1846 made inevitable the pattern of western settlement, the war between the states, the eventual triumph of the continental idea. The present book goes still farther back, into the closing years of the mountain fur trade. In his next he will deal with Lewis and Clark, back in the years when the West was still

Louisiana or Mexico, and the idea of a continental nation had just been born.

Provocatively, excitingly, with wide and curious learning Mr. DeVoto gives us in *Across the Wide Missouri* a history of the twilight years of the fur trade. He is at pains to project present into future and indicate the obscure beginnings of later and greater things. The period he treats contains the beginning of the end of the Plains Indians, the virtual end of the mountain trappers, the first trickles of empire down California and Oregon trails. These years saw the first wagons and the first white squaws go across South Pass and on beyond Fort Hall; they saw the founding of such landmark posts as Fort Laramie, Fort Boise, Fort Bridger.

On the trails and rivers of the West between 1832 and 1839 there were not too many whites. We see most of them here, in a gallery of sharply etched portraits: mountain men, factors of the rival fur companies, premature dreamers, missionaries, adventurous businessmen like Bonneville and Wyeth, sportsmen like William Drummond Stewart of Scotland. Stewart is especially important, because his summer and winter excursions to the mountains brought him into the heart of most of the important happenings of these years, and because in his 1837 safari was included a tame painter, Alfred Jacob Miller of Baltimore and New Orleans, with a commission to sketch the life beyond the frontier.

Historically and ethnologically as well as artistically, Miller's sketches are of great interest. Discovered some years ago by Mae Reed Porter, they are the first pictures made of large parts of the West. Many of them are beautifully reproduced here, both in black and white and in full color, along with paintings by Charles Bodmer and George Catlin, and they add greatly to the beauty and to the value of the book.

Merely because of the freshness of its approach and its large use of primary sources, especially the diaries of travelers, this book is an important addition to such standard history as Chittenden and Coues. But because of its constant cross-reference and its restless curiosity in a very wide context, it becomes something more: the kind of intelligent study of social dynamisms that not too many historians are capable of.

Probably there will be objectors to Mr. DeVoto's judgments on all the early missionaries except Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, yet his charges of narrowness, inflexibility, jealousy, petty rancor, are based in the main on quotation from their own journals. His treatment of the Indians too is likely to seem mercurial to some, and he may seem to grow too ribald about their stone age superstitions, too skeptical of their often-celebrated courage, too dubious of their savage skills and intelligence. On the whole, he likes the Crows and the Nez Percés best: the Nez Percés were the best horse breeders and bowmakers in the West, and the Crows were the most skillful thieves.

Mr. DeVoto admires skill, in other words; he admires the mountain men for the same reasons, for their perfect adaptation to a given set of conditions. No laws, even moral laws, can survive a basic alteration of those condi-

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tions, and that is one of the firmest lessons of this big rich book: How fast the mountain men went out, how fast the Indians followed them, when the conditions changed and the forts along the western trails became not trading posts but way stations on the road to Oregon. By the end of the book, the mountain man has been overtaken by the settler, and a period of the West's brief and furious history has come to an end. The story has never been more excitingly told than it is here.

WALLACE STEGNER

✓ ✓ ✓

A MULTITUDE OF LIVING THINGS \$3.75

Lorus J. and Margery J. Milne DODD, MEAD

Too many of us go through the world with our eyes closed. All around us — in the air, in the earth, on the surface of ponds and streams — is a multitude of living things that we never notice. Dr. and Mrs. Milne keep their eyes open, and their cameras close at hand, whether they are in the woods, at the seashore, or in their own back yard. They have watched, with curiosity and understanding, the habits of insects, crustaceans, and small mammals, and reported on their findings with clarity and humor.

This volume of essays on widely varying aspects of natural history contains an astonishing amount of curious information: Birds and frogs have three eyelids, the great blue whale has eyes the size of a grapefruit, frogs can pull their eyes into their heads until they bulge downward in the mouth, a crab's pincers are "knife and fork, and spade and hod, a means of making love and war and home and music." A flatworm, parasitic in birds, must spend part of its life cycle in the eyestalks of snails; and protozoans living in the digestive tract of termites break up wood pulp for their hosts. There are four insects which are never found except on pitcher plants, and would become extinct should pitcher plants vanish from the earth.

The detailed life histories are easy reading: A caddis-fly larva making itself a tube or case is described as though it were a seamstress or a carpenter. There is an amazing account of a sexton beetle burying a sparrow; and the plant gall caused by the grub of a wasp is compared to an apartment house, furnished and serviced by the plant. One chapter discusses fossils, and another the fossilized insect and plant remains found in amber.

Photographs made by the authors present some of the small creatures many times natural size. *A Multitude of Living Things* is good observation, good writing, and good reading for either the amateur or professional naturalist.

LUCILE Q. MANN

✓ ✓ ✓

SONS OF THE STRANGER \$3.00

Fielding Burke LONGMANS, GREEN

At its best, Fielding Burke's new novel concerns the bloody war and the legal monstrosities by which our

Western mineowners attempted to crush the first labor unions. The period is indefinite, but appears to be the late nineties and early nineteen-hundreds. The place is indefinite, too, being an imaginary state called Uvardo, located west of Chicago and east of California. The details of an old-time labor war cannot fail to be interesting, and while the author sticks to strikes, dynamiting, and the horrors of martial law, *Sons of the Stranger* is good reading.

Too much of the novel is devoted to matters which have little bearing on industrial history. There is a hero, who has worked in the mines, studies to be a labor lawyer, deserts the cause for money and success, and finally saves his soul by returning to Uvardo and the still-uncertain battle. There are eight or ten subplots, ranging from the troubles of an Indian tribe to the unhappy position of Negroes. Because Miss Burke lacks the skill of quick characterization, the people involved in all these side episodes are never more than names.

Miss Burke's intention to write what is called an epic novel is so clear that the reader cannot help noticing that she has not done so. The tough, authentic background of labor war is diluted by the author's romantic view of her characters, and the characters themselves dissolve into shadows against the realistic background. The author's sympathies are warm, and always on the right side, but they have led her into exploring far too many aspects of a period that was complicated enough at the simplest level. The result is a book so overcrowded with everything that it fairly bursts its binding.

PHOEBE LOU ADAMS

✓ ✓ ✓

PARIS HERALD \$3.00

Al Laney APPLETON-CENTURY

LATE CITY EDITION \$3.50

Joseph G. Herzberg and others HOLT

THE *Paris Herald* was a pulse-quickening name to every newspaperman, especially during the thirty years bounding the turn of the century when its proprietor was the younger James Gordon Bennett. To a newspaperman, a job on the *Herald* meant not only living in Paris but even being paid to live in Paris. If the pay was erratic, the paper held other compensations for its staff, and these are now recounted by Al Laney, who worked there through the thick of the twenties. It would have been easy to overblow the story, but Mr. Laney has let the facts speak for themselves. His book is thus a low-pressure and thoroughly diverting report. Its flavor can be conveyed by one of his anecdotes.

On December 27, 1899, for instance, the following letter appeared on the editorial page of the *Paris Herald*:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Herald*:—

I am anxious to find out the way to figure the temperature from centigrade to Fahrenheit and vice versa. In other words, I want to know, whenever I see the temperature designated on the centigrade thermometer, how to find out what it would be on Fahrenheit's thermometer.

OLD PHILADELPHIA LADY

"This is the most famous letter ever written to the editor of any newspaper," Mr. Laney comments, "more famous even than the one Virginia O'Hanlon wrote to the editor of the New York Sun regarding the authenticity of Santa Claus. It appeared again in the same place every day for the next eighteen years and five months — 6718 issues in all — exactly as it had appeared the first time. It was so run on the orders of James Gordon Bennett.

"On practically every one of those days someone saw it for the first time and sent in the explanation. . . ." But the Old Philadelphia Lady continued to reiterate her question, and no one ever succeeded in getting from Bennett an explanation of why.

With Bennett, the expatriate owner, living in France, no one in New York had paid much attention to the Paris *Herald* and its easygoing ways. One is hard put to find the moral in the fantastic circumstance under which the Bennett newspapers were sold by his executors to Munsey in 1920 for four million dollars. "The deal was for the *Herald* of New York and the *Evening Telegram*," Mr. Laney tells us, "and the Paris *Herald* was thrown in as a sort of appendage." Munsey was expected to kill off the Paris *Herald* in a hurry, but he found to his astonishment that the paper not only was making money but that it possessed a million dollars in cash.

Late City Edition is an operating description of a present-day metropolitan newspaper by the city editor of the New York *Herald Tribune* and twenty-eight other members of its staff. More knowledgeable and far more readable than most books about journalism, the collection covers everything from obituaries to suburban beats, the status of the girl reporter, libel, and the pressroom. Perhaps on account of Mr. Herzberg's editing, or simply because the *Tribune* staff are naturally so minded, *Late City Edition* is agreeably put together and full of good sense.

CHARLES W. MORTON

ORDEAL OF THE UNION

\$10.00

Allan Nevins

SCRIBNER

THE three decades immediately preceding the War Between the States have attracted some of the finest talents in the field of American historical scholarship. Allan Nevins's *Ordeal of the Union* would seem destined to become a major contribution to the impressive list of studies dealing with that period of national travail and with its tragic denouement.

The first two volumes of Professor Nevins's trilogy — he promises the third in a few months — span the eighteen-forties and fifties, with occasional glances ranging backward to the preceding decade. His main narrative, however, begins at General Winfield Scott's headquarters "on the craggy height of Tacubaya" outside Mexico City, on the September day in 1846 which was to witness the end of the Mexican War. As a point of departure for this brilliant study of the political, social, and economic forces which were to sweep the nation into the grimmest of all civil wars in modern history, the author's choice is an artistic triumph.

For the rumblings of earlier strife over the twin problems of slavery and preservation of national unity had

Here's one word out of the 145,000 in this book

(actual size)

HORN-ING noun 1 The appearance of the moon in the first or last quarter. 2 A serenade of harsh, discordant music; a charivari. 3 [Scot.] A public announcement made with blasts of a horn. — **LETTERS OF HORNING** In Scots law, a judicial mandate, requiring a person to pay or perform as had been decreed against him.

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been portents of danger rather than actual heralds of disaster. This triumph of arms in a war bitterly criticized throughout the young Republic actually opened the floodgates in the dispute between slave state and free.

Ordeal of the Union is both objective and vivacious in its narrative. Some chapters attain the high plateau of historical writing. The chronicle of the great debate in 1850, when Clay emerged from retirement and, abetted by Webster and moderates of all parties, won a resounding if transitory triumph, is an extraordinarily fine performance. The three closely packed chapters devoted to the economic and social impact of slavery upon the Southern states, and upon the country as a whole, carry implications which still trouble our nation.

One of the distinctions of Mr. Nevins's history is that it touches upon many problems which the reader will identify as still current. The constitutional dilemmas flowing from weakness in the Presidency at times of growing crisis have seldom been set down more cogently than in this story of a succession of leaders, from Polk to Buchanan, who proved inadequate to meet crises. The fracturing of political parties, the quarrels of factions, and the profound and dangerous schisms implicit in sectional extremism stand clearly revealed in *Ordeal of the Union* as the penalties which any political system must pay if ineptitude at the executive level is matched by complacent evasions, expedients, and shifty opportunism in the legislative branch.

Professor Nevins has sought to present a balanced portrait of the times he depicts. He has succeeded to a notable degree. Richard Green's admonition that "political history, to be intelligible, and just, must be based upon social history in its largest sense" has been the watchword of the author. He probes the depths as well as the heights; he is by turns the unflinching sociologist and the elucidator of national ideals, the portrayer of epic scenes, and a Hogarth of the roaring forties and fanatical fifties.

This work is excellently indexed in each volume and has some unusually interesting illustrations. It is to be hoped that the scattered typographical errors will be corrected; they have no place in a work of such painstaking skill as this.

JAMES H. POWERS

ADVENTURES WITH A TEXAS NATURALIST

Roy Bedichek

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CACHE LAKE COUNTRY

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John J. Rowlands

NORTON

OUT of Texas comes a book of freshness and charm to delight the naturalist, amateur and professional alike. I gather that it is Mr. Bedichek's first book too, at least at this expansive level. He took a year's leave of absence from his duties in the field of Texas education to put it together, living in a century-old house on the Edwards Plateau — a region which comprises about one eighth of the area of the entire state. It is of this plateau largely,

and of the Davis Mountains of southwestern Texas, that he writes. Some thirty years of notes, observation, bird-watching, and exploration are so digested, recorded, arranged, and synthesized that the whole reads as though the man had come in from the desert, the plateau, and the mountains as from a single walk and reported on it by the following morning. It takes skill to do that; and the way in which Mr. Bedichek does it suggests a long apprenticeship in the writer's art.

To most of his readers the region will be as new as the man, and the casual mention of Highway 290 and the Bankhead Highway U.S. No. 80 will surely send some cars with Michigan, Ohio, and Massachusetts license plates in search of them next summer. In search, that is, of mesquite, vermilion flycatchers, *Quercus harvardii* with a lower-case *h* (Harvard's oak, "perhaps the least oak in the world"); the Inca dove, the armadillo, the golden eagle, the phainopepla (suggestive of the waxwing); the mockingbird at his confusing best, the white-necked raven of the Davis Mountains — "a species that serves this region instead of the crow"; and the winter wren in Texas. Incidentally, does the winter wren sing in Texas as he does in the Laurentians?

Mr. Bedichek has the mark both of the scientist and the poet: "a fleck of sunlight in a sky almost ready for stars." He seldom pulls the longbow. He has (what seems to me rare in a naturalist) a first-rate sense of humor. His chapters on nature lore in folk lore and on folk-naming of birds and flowers are flavory stuff. When he says that the frog "is noted the world over for attempting to ingest objects much too large" he clothes you with the naturalist's cloak, and you are not to be astonished at the report of his friend finding a live duck in a pond with his head in the belly of a bullfrog. And as to the fabulous myth of the hitchhiking hummingbird, migration-bent, he quotes a letter from a gentleman "apparently enraged that I should even raise such a question." Said the gentleman in part: "Referring to your inquiry, I shot a lovely specimen of the great horned owl two days ago. Imagine my surprise and delight when fourteen tiny hummingbirds tumbled out from underneath the old owl's wings and side-pockets. . . ." If you would see Mr. Bedichek in righteous anger rising, read him on the killing of the golden eagle by airplane: a sickening footnote to American sportsmanship.

Though it is more than possible that an elderly aunt or a young intellectual would enjoy and profit by Roy Bedichek's book, it is much more than probable that neither would understand Mr. Rowlands, his point of view, or his craft. You will have to know the smell of the absolute woods in all its frontier loneliness and to be able to read its achromatic language a little for yourself in order to understand, in its queer and completely original way, one of the most attractive books of the year. In this wretched mechanical world of drifting psychoses, the more the pity. There is no word here from any pulpit — least of all on the fatuity of escape. But there is medicine in this book where nothing is prescribed.

Sometimes one tires of fine writing. Mr. Rowlands is

no fine writer, but he is a very honest writer; and his intimate, objective account of twelve moons' worth of living in the country north toward Hudson Bay touches subjective poetry in the most unexpected ways. "Portage to Contentment," he says in the beginning; and how well does his pack hold together, and how sure he is of the unblazed trail! "Indians don't leave forwarding addresses"; but some readers will want the address of Chief Tibeash, the author's companion, teacher, and occasional alter ego. Though I fear the charge would insult him, I should call the Chief a civilized man.

This is a book about living in the woods, when not to know how is to die. The deep snows, the sun on the paddle blade, the smell of rotting pine, the feel of rain, the power of silence, the meaninglessness of measured time, the ever changing balance of life against life — of these things Mr. Rowlands modestly writes at genuine first-hand. Everything a man in the pathless forest needs to know, to make, to gather, to preserve, and to use is here to the last detail. It is Indian lore more than white man's, and is all the better for that. Accompanying the chapters, up and down the margins, across the bottom of the page, and in frequent full-page spread, are the sightly pen-and-ink drawings of Henry B. Kane. They appear to permeate the text — explaining, teaching, amplifying, telling a story, or showing how to make a grass microscope, an Indian top, a smokehouse, long-tailed pie, and a hundred other things. This is Mr. Kane's contribution: half the book.

Where is that outdoor boy of all ages? Something has been written for him, I think.

DAVID McCORD

BEFORE THE DELUGE

\$3.50

Mark Aldanov

SCRIBNER

In the early 1860's Alexander Herzen, pioneer Russian liberal philosopher, thus described his country: "From all the corners of our enormous land, from the Don to the Urals, from the Volga to the Dnieper a moan is growing, a grumbling is rising — this is the first roar of the sea-billow which begins to rage, pregnant with storm after a long tiresome calm." This is the period — the crucial years from 1860 to 1880 — that Mr. Aldanov has selected for his sweeping historical novel of imperial Russia. Alexander II, the czar who was smart enough to emancipate Russia's serfs but not sufficiently wise to institute the political reforms which might have averted his assassination and the revolutionary deluge of the twentieth century, is the central character of this story. Around him and his dramatic reign the author has created a series of weakly integrated tales which flow over the Russian frontier and take us into the Europe of Bismarck, Hugo, Marx, and Disraeli. In breadth of canvas the novel reminds one of Tolstoi's *War and Peace* and in length it follows the tradition of the great Russian novelists — but that is where the similarities end.

Before the Deluge is not likely to precipitate a storm in the literary samovar as did Mr. Aldanov's *Fifth Seal*, in 1943, with its unflattering portraits of Soviet communists and Spanish republicans. For having eschewed the passionate controversies of contemporary politics, the author has treated the relatively safe period of almost a century ago with such Olympian aloofness as to leave both the

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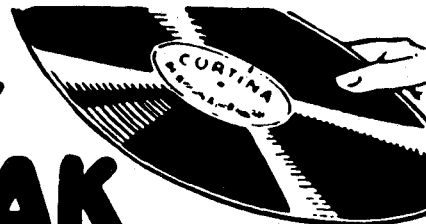
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student of history and the lover of fiction equally cold.

Mr. Aldanov writes with considerable skill and historical faithfulness; after having produced some half-dozen "period" novels, he has mastered the craftsmanship of synthesizing epic events entertainingly although not always convincingly. Miss Catherine Routsky, his translator, has apparently done adequate justice to his native Russian prose. But in his portrayal of characters, be they fictitious, or historic figures like Dostoevski, Bakunin, Wagner, Marx, or Gladstone, the author remains scientifically indifferent and coldly skeptical. Consequently, they are often wooden and frigid. The only somewhat sympathetic figure is Katia, the lowly circus performer, but one has to struggle through a few hundred pages of rambling narrative and follow her lover's adventures in half a dozen capitals and two hemispheres before realizing that her great romance is just another one of those boy-meets-girl affairs. This is definitely not a book to be read in one sitting.

Structurally, the story is confused and devoid of essential unity. Indeed, whatever plot there is seems to be used primarily as cement for tying together the character sketches of some of the dominant political and artistic figures of the age.

Students of the contemporary Soviet scene will find in this book a number of plausible and interesting parallels between the period of Stalin and that of Alexander II, when, as now, Russia was the main topic of conversation in European salons.

HENRY SHAPIRO

1 1 1

THE MIND ON THE WING \$3.50

Herbert Faulkner West

COWARD-McCANN

BOOK-COLLECTING AS A HOBBY \$3.00

P. H. Muir

KNOPF

THIS is the day of the perfectionist, and the amateur has become the expert. Professor West is an exponent of the bent-pin school among fishers for books. In *The Mind on the Wing* he has prefaced eight papers on literature in various fields with a chapter "On Reading and Collecting," which offers advice and information for the beginning collector. Unfortunately the information is not always correct, and covers the same ground that many of his predecessors (notably Mr. Winterich) have adequately described. In his résumé of the study of bibliography, Professor West has perpetrated one serious error. The signature mark is to help the binder in "gathering" or "collating" the *folded* sheets, *not* "to guide the binder in folding." And it should also be noted that while the Grubhorn Press, the Anthoensen Press, and the Yale University Press are printers, the Nonesuch Press, the Limited Editions Club, and the Heritage Club are publishers, not printers at all.

The body of the book describes seven fields for consideration of the collector. There are chapters on mountaineering literature, a fascinating source of excitement for the armchair as well as the genuine climber; on travel

books, war books, and nature writers. I was warmed by the author's tribute to *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada*, still a neglected American classic, and while the paper on war books becomes at times little more than a catalogue, it will serve as a useful preliminary list for anyone who wants to make a start with the literature of World War II. There is an appreciative chapter on Robert Frost (with verbatim quotations of the inscriptions by Mr. Frost in the books in Professor West's Frost collection), an unsatisfactory catalogue of the Mencken collection in the Dartmouth Library, and an account of the published writings of Henry Miller. And there is a concluding chapter containing a list of Professor West's hundred favorite books. Here again inaccuracies distressing in the work of a scholar have crept in. Lawrence's name does not appear on the title page of his translation of the *Odyssey*, though the preface is signed "T. E. Shaw," and Mr. West's date for the first printing of *De Rerum Natura* is out by a couple of centuries. With its faults, stylistic and factual, *The Mind on the Wing* is a useful but not an essential contribution to the literature of book-collecting.

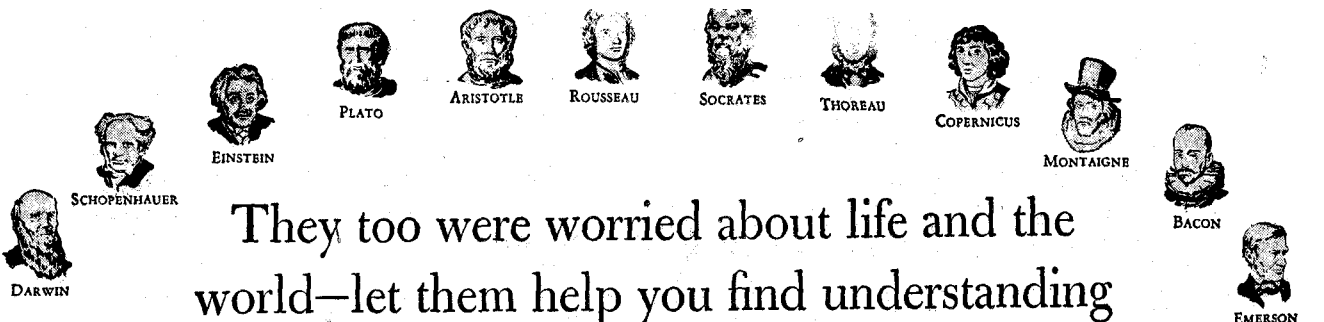
Percy Muir is one of the more imaginative cataloguers in the English book-trade, and a guidebook for collectors from his hand is sure to command attention. His *Book-Collecting as a Hobby* is a valuable little treatise which, though it parallels to a certain extent the work of other writers, should not be overlooked by any collector, whether beginner or experienced. Though short, it is packed with information with which every real bookman ought to be familiar, and the letter entitled "What Shall I Collect?" does add a few fresh ideas to a subject that almost every bibliophile-author has had a fling at.

This book is not, however, primarily propaganda for collecting as a hobby. In it will be found answers to most of the questions a layman invariably asks when confronted with a bookseller's catalogue or caught unawares in the library of a collector. In it also will be found many of those odd bits of knowledge which every bookseller and book-collector ought to possess but often doesn't. Some of Mr. Muir's chapter titles are, perhaps, deceptive. If "How to Tell a First Edition" really told all in thirteen pages, we could throw away a lot of our valuable reference libraries. And while "How to Tell If a Book Is Perfect" does cover its subject thoroughly, it also includes a simple explanation of the whys and meaning of such terms as "8vo," "signature," and the like. There is a very sound chapter on books about books, masquerading as "Mountains into Molehills."

The book's value for reference use might have been increased if the index had been expanded a little, and some readers may find the epistolary style of exposition irritating. A typographical error on page 106 is likely to embarrass Messrs. Scribner with a rush of bargain hunters.

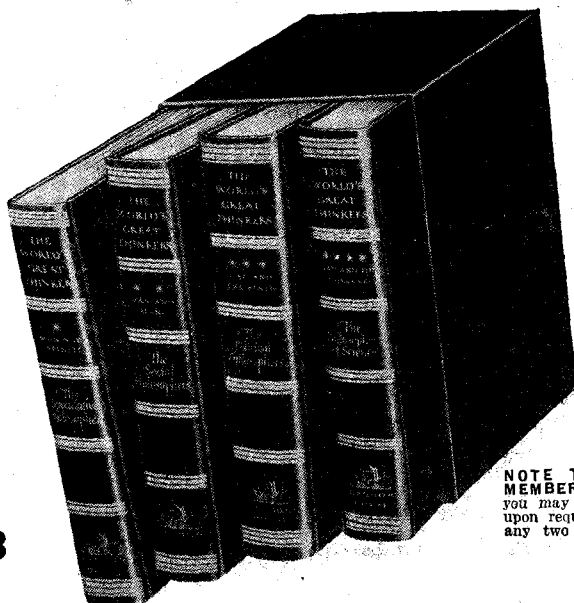
It is a joy to see an addition to the small number of really worth-while books on a subject that has, unfortunately, inspired an incredible quantity of mediocre ones.

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